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June 1999

THE CALL came through to the *World Soccer* office late one afternoon. Jean-Marc Bosman was in town to watch Fulham (well, if it's good enough for the Pope and Michael Jackson…) He wanted to talk to us about the European Court judgment which has revolutionalised football and turned his life upside down.

Bosman's story is not a happy one. We reveal on page 6 how the millionaire players who have gained most from the Bosman ruling have snubbed the Belgian's appeal for financial help. As Keir Radnedge writes in our exclusive interview, "Bosman has sacrificed his career, marriage and future to help people who care for him the least."

We believe it is about time that the wealthy superstars of Europe were shamed into giving Bosman his dues. The bank account details of the fund set up to help Bosman are published on page 7. Over the coming months, we will be publishing the names of the players who respond to Bosman's plight – as well as those who continue to ignore him. Are you watching Steve McManaman? ***Gavin Hamilton, Editor*** *(gavin_hamilton@ipc.co.uk)*

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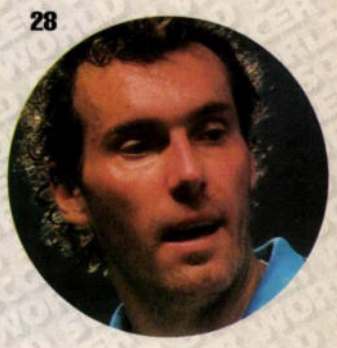

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Executive Editor Keir Radnedge
Editor Gavin Hamilton
Art Editor Gary Payne
Production Editor Peter Neish
Picture Editor Duncan Bond
Editorial Secretary June Hiscock

Thanks this issue to:
David Prole, Mike Hughes, David Rallis

Editorial
TEL: 0171-261 5737
FAX: 0171-261 7474
E-MAIL: world_soccer@ipc.co.uk

Advertising Keamus Setna
Production Manager Tom Jennings
Managing Director Andy McDuff
Publisher Sean Singleton

Display Advertising
TEL: 0171-261 5499

Classified Advertising
TEL: 0171-261 2823

Back Issues Department
TEL: 0181-503 0588

International licensing enquiries
00 44 (0)171-261 7715
E-MAIL: nicola_goode@ipc.co.uk

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Keir Radnedge
Executive Editor
COMMENTARY

'Even the players admit that Belgium will only be taking part in the Euro 2000 finals because they are hosts'

Losing in front of their home crowd...Egypt subjected Belgium to another 1-0 defeat

Miserable Belgium will be shown up by the best

BELGIUM look likely to be the poorest European national team ever to play host to a major tournament finals. That is a sorry indictment of the present state of Belgian football for those of us who have admired, down the years, the ability of managers such as Guy Thys to create teams whose abilities added up to more than the sum of the individual parts.

Discipline, pragmatism and tactical concentration provided the platform on which the varying talents of the likes of Jan Ceulemans and Enzo Scifo could flourish to remarkable effect in both the World Cup (fourth in 1986) and European Championship (runners-up in 1980).

Now, after four successive 1-0 home defeats in their preparation programme, it is no surprise that much of the blame is being arrowed simplistically if predictably in the direction of coach Georges Leekens. But the malaise runs far deeper than team management. Indeed, the players themselves acknowledged the fact when a recent poll of top division squads in Belgium backed Leekens as the best man for the job.

Some 37 per cent believe him to be the only man who can pull the joint Euro 2000 hosts through the present crisis before the best of Europe turns up on their doorstep next year. The only rival in the poll was Eric Gerets, the former international full-back whose long-term future is already decided – he takes over this summer from Bobby Robson at PSV Eindhoven.

When Belgium last hosted the finals of the European Championship, in 1972, they were semi-finalists. Next year, when they are coupled with Holland, they will be lucky even to progress beyond the first-round groups. In fact, they will only be taking part at all thanks to their right as hosts. Even the players admit as much. Luis Oliveira, the Brazil-born Belgian striker who stars in Italy for Fiorentina, is on record as saying: "Given the present state of Belgian football, being hosts is the only way we could have qualified."

On present form the Belgian national team will be the poorest at the finals and not properly worthy of their place among Europe's elite. The recent 1-0 defeat by Egypt was the last straw for a media which had long since turned against the coach, a former international centre-back. "Leekens is sitting in the ejector seat," said *La Libre Belgique*; "Now it's time for a foreign coach," said *La Derniere Heure*.

Karel Vertongen, chairman of the Belgian football union's technical committee, remains a staunch supporter of Leekens in public, but his own credibility is also at stake. Vertongen says: "The president of the federation, the general secretary, the treasurer and I all support Leekens 100 per cent. I want to make that very clear."

But votes of confidence in the football world only fuel speculation about impending changes – and Leekens has been on shaky ground ever since the World Cup flop in neighbouring France last summer.

"We did not go to the World Cup expecting to win," says Paul Van Himst, the former Anderlecht hero now safely retired after a glittering playing career and two comparatively successful spells as national manager. "But we did believe that, with our supporters present in large numbers, we would put up a good show. Instead what happened? A disaster."

Belgium should have cruised into the second round after grinding out a morale-boosting goalless draw in their World Cup opener against Holland. But they under-rated Mexico, who held them 2-2, and then produced a dreadful performance against South Korea. The 1-1 draw spelled an early exit – and tears among players and fans.

Top striker Luc Nilis, now starring in Holland under Robson's guidance at PSV, vowed never to play again for the national team. He has been sorely missed but insists: "I used to think that the greatest honour for a player was to represent his country. But then I found out that a lot of what goes on is political – especially for us Belgians – and that undermines your enthusiasm. Of course I want my country to do well but the players are compromised by the political situation."

Nilis may thus be counted as yet another victim of the French-Flemish split that undermines all the country's football, not just the national team. Many fans, for example, still believe that Nilis was dropped – controversially – from the World Cup in 1990 because veteran manager Thys was under pressure to balance out the squad between players from the two inguistic communities.

As Jean-Louis Dupont, the lawyer who steered Jean-Marc Bosman's revolutionary case through the courts, once said: "It's strange how, at the end of a season, nobody admits to fixing matches but a French-language club who have nothing to play for may surprisingly lose a match which helps another struggling French club stay up."

Belgian football has been in crisis since the early 1980s. The Heysel disaster, when 39 Juventus fans were crushed to death at the 1985 Champions Cup Final after a terrace charge by Liverpool hooligans, revealed administrative incompetence. Years later it emerged that, at that same time, top club Anderlecht were 'bending' referees at international level while Standard Liege were involved in a similar process at domestic level.

The crisis at the heart of Belgian football has been laid bare now because, as Leekens says: "We don't have the same quality of young players coming through and those we have do not make the progress necessary because they are blocked by too many foreign players in our League."

Leekens thus soldiers on for the time being because nobody else is prepared to carry the can for factors beyond the manager's control.

Real target next season

REAL MADRID have narrowed down their transfer targets as they plan for the bid to become European champions once more.

Madrid, who won the Champions League last season but were knocked out this time by Kyiv Dynamo in the quarter-finals, have decided that failings up front were more costly than weakness at the back.

Croatia's Davor Suker, top scorer at the World Cup finals last year, will be sold at the season's end and uncertainty surrounds the future of Predrag Mijatovic – the match-winner against Juventus last May – while he stays on the sidelines out of concern over the situation in his native Yugoslavia.

President Lorenzo Sanz has discussed attacking options with coach John Toshack and narrowed the field to one of three: Boca Juniors' Martin Palermo, new hero of Argentina, Ruud Van Nistelrooy, brilliant in Holland this season under Bobby Robson at PSV Eindhoven, and Fiorentina's Argentinian World Cup veteran Gabriel Batistuta.

Sanz said: "Every club has to think a long way ahead in the transfer market nowadays. The best players have a lot of options so it's no good targeting just one player and expecting to get him. Not even Real Madrid have that power nowadays."

Surplus to requirements...Real Madrid's Davor Suker

Brian Glanville

Brian's Memory Lane

THERE ARE, of course, critics and critics. One of the most noted within the game remains Brian Glanville, whose individualistic approach to soccer writing is sketched out in *Football Memories* (Virgin Books, £16.99).

Anyone who wondered quite where the Glanville interest in Italian football began will find the answers here – as well as picking up on the host of characters who offered inspiration for a number of the people in his football short stories. Essential reading for Glanville followers.

A princely promotion

PRINCE CHARLES can expect a bumper turn-out from international football's royalty at his Highgrove reception on the eve of the FA Cup Final. The Prince, with FA advice about the guest list, is organising a football lunch at his Gloucestershire home on May 21 with a view to impressing the movers and shakers within the game.

FIFA president Sepp Blatter told me that he expected a majority of his 24-member executive to turn up. That could be significant because it is the executive that will decide in March next year on whether England, Germany or South Africa – discounting five other 'paper' bids – should host the World Cup finals in 2006.

Blatter said: "You can expect many executive members to accept the invitation. England should not be worried that the recent problems within the Football Association will affect its World Cup bid or will have any effect on the executive committee members. The situation with Keith Wiseman and Graham Kelly may have been a big story in England at the time but in international terms it had very little impact.

"What matters are the facilities and infrastructure and security guarantees that a country can offer for a World Cup – not the identity of officials whose names people forget very quickly."

The FIFA president has never made any secret of his belief that, logically, 2006 should be the opportunity for an African nation to host a World Cup for the first time. But he was at pains to insist that his own non-appearance at Prince Charles's event should not be taken as a snub by England.

Blatter said: "The only reason I will not be able to attend is that if I am there as well as my colleagues it would look too much like an executive committee event – and that would be undiplomatic when you consider that other countries are bidding."

England's most effective promotional weapon, according to Blatter, is Sir Bobby Charlton. He said: "To have such a personality going around the world on your behalf makes a great impression. This is where England with Sir Bobby, and Germany with Franz Beckenbauer, have a great advantage over their rivals."

Yallop's off the mark

FIFA president Sepp Blatter is not allowing his enthusiasm for the job to which he was elected last June to be undermined by the allegations made by British author David Yallop in a controversial German-language book about FIFA, sub-titled 'How they stole the game'.

Blatter vehemently denies allegations about both the improper influencing of delegates before the presidential election at FIFA Congress in Paris last year and about the release of tickets to the black market.

In fact, the vast bulk of the book's 399 pages have nothing to do with Blatter and are aimed solidly at Brazilian Joao Havelange, FIFA's president from 1974 – when he ousted Sir Stanley Rous – until his retirement last June.

I have read the book and have found myself totally at odds with Yallop over his conclusion. Yallop avers that Havelange and his cohorts "stole the game" for self-aggrandising, personal and business ends. I felt that for football to have survived and expanded in the fashion it has represented an enormous triumph for the game.

Yallop's book is a catalogue of every nasty rumour and innuendo that has ever been whispered against Havelange – and then some more. All of this unremitting negativity forms the backdrop to a caricature South America of crooked businessmen and bandits.

The end of the book is the most disappointing. You look for the list of acknowledgements, sources and evidential references to back up all Yallop's accusations. Instead he credits source references to only three books (one of them one of his own) and that's it.

You wonder, as Blatter has done: "Where is the evidence?"

WORLD EXCLUSIVE

Bosman: shaming the superstars

You want to say thanks to the man who set you up for life? Then here's how… By Keir Radnedge

SUPER RICH superstars of the western world, here is your chance to offer an appropriate thank-you to Jean-Marc Bosman for turning you into multi-millionaires.

It's perfectly easy; you take out your chequebook (or, even easier, ask your agent to take out your chequebook), write out the equivalent sum of your last league win bonus, and send it to a special account which has been set up in Brussels by people who care.

The strange thing is that the very people for whom Bosman sacrificed his career, his marriage and the prospects of a reasonably secure future are those who appear to care for him the least.

Bosman – remarkably, and to his credit, more bemused than bitter – explained the latest poignant twist in his story on a visit to London.

The youthful tycoons of the Premiership offering him a gala reception? Don't you believe it. Bosman flew to London – where he played nearly 20 years ago in the UEFA Youth Championship – with the modest objective of attending Fulham's 4-1 win over Millwall in the Second Division. He was not there as a guest of honour of Mohamed Al Fayed or Kevin Keegan. Simply, he wanted to thank fellow Belgian Philippe Albert and his Fulham team-mates Chris Coleman, Dirk Lehman, Gus Uhlenbeek and Kit Symons, who had dipped into their pockets for a donation to the fighting fund set up on his behalf by the Belgian trades unions. Albert paid £2,000, the others each gave their £700 win bonus from a 3-1 win against Reading in February.

"I appreciated the gesture so much I decided to say thank you in person," said Bosman. "The surprise was that it came from players in a lower-division club rather than the big stars who can, maybe, afford it more easily."

Bosman has become, through his battle against the establishment, one of the world's most famous footballers…but not for playing the game and at a heavy personal price.

He said: "I always dreamed of being a successful footballer. I played more than 20 times for Belgium at youth level. But then, after I started my legal action, I spent so much time in court that I could not keep up my fitness and no club wanted to sign me. I sacrificed my career."

More than that. Bosman's marriage collapsed under the strain and he was left without income after the failure of his attempted transfer from Liege to Dunkerque which provoked him into legal action. Even though Bosman was out of contract, the Belgian club insisted on its right to demand a transfer fee which the French outfit could not afford.

Bosman appealed to the Belgian courts. In December 1995 the European Court handed down a landmark ruling which outlawed, throughout the European Union, all foreign player transfer restrictions and decreed that no transfer fee could be demanded for an out-of-contract player. "I am proud of what I achieved," said Bosman. "Footballers should have the same employment rights as any other worker to change jobs. I am not happy with all the consequences of the Bosman ruling but the main parts have revolutionised life for most professionals."

> **"He has sacrificed his career, wife and future to help people who care for him the least"**

Bosman lived until the middle of last year on little more than hot air and with some help from his parents. Nobody in the football world would employ him because he was branded a trouble-maker. At the height of the battle the Belgian federation, unpardonably, warned all clubs under its jurisdiction that, in case of legal success for Bosman, any side who had signed him would lose all the points gained in matches in which he played.

Only last year, when the Belgian federation was at last persuaded to offer an out-of-court settlement over his legal costs and compensation, could Bosman afford, modestly, to start rebuilding his life. Even then it is doubtful whether the BFU would have settled but for 'persuasion' from FIFA – which had grown tired of this grumbling appendix – and for fear of the unpleasant publicity which might accrue during next year's finals of the European Championship.

"I was prepared to go back to court to claim the costs," said Bosman. "But the Belgian federation eventually realised that the case would be heard at around the time Belgium was co-hosting the European finals. They knew that would not look good so they decided to offer a settlement. I accepted because I had been fighting for eight years and I wanted my life back."

Repaying the debt…Philippe Albert

The money will not last long – which was the reason the Belgian unions appealed last December to players at all western Europe's top clubs to help the man who has handed them a golden key to life beyond football.

The unions opened a bank account on Bosman's behalf and wrote to all the captains or star players of every top division club in the EU urging them "to make a concrete and strong gesture to, at long last, thank Jean-Marc for all his efforts".

It was not asking much – just that players in every club follow the example set by the Dutch national team two years ago, at the suggestion of twins Frank and Ronald De Boer, in donating their victory bonus from one League match. That should not have taxed the minds or bank accounts of players such as Steve McManaman, who will shortly take lucrative advantage of Bosman's fight to move fee-free to Real Madrid.

Sadly, disgracefully, Bosman's modest plea has gone largely ignored. The response from players in the top divisions in England, Italy, France, Germany and most of the rest of the European Union has been zilch.

Not that it has been much better elsewhere. It took Dominique Lemoine, a Belgian playing in Spain, to start the ball rolling; then Dutchman Frank Verlaat at Stuttgart; veteran Belgian goalkeeper Michel Preud'homme at Benfica; now Albert and his Fulham colleagues. The Dutch agent Rob Jansen, realising that he had benefited along with clients such as Dennis Bergkamp and Marc Overmars, made a 'corporate' donation.

Bosman, for whom nothing comes easy, is thus learning a sad lesson about the nature of most modern footballers. He said: "It did not surprise me initially that other players did not appear to recognise what I had done. It was only as they eventually came towards the end of their contracts that they would understand how life had changed for them – the power they had been given over their own careers and financial affairs.

"Before my court ruling most of the players who transferred from one country to another were only the big stars – usually attacking players, goalscorers. Anyway, they were restricted because every country allowed only a handful of foreign players in each League team. Now, you look around Europe and see that any player can benefit from the chance to play abroad, which can improve his life not only financially but culturally and in football terms.

"After France won the World Cup last year, their manager, Aime Jacquet, said that they had triumphed thanks to Bosman. If it had not been for the judgment then second-level players such as Bixente Lizarazu – to take just one example – would not have been able to transfer abroad and improve their skills."

Bosman was not, as a teenage footballer, some sort of raving left-wing revolutionary, in the political sense. But he saw his destiny coming from a long way off. He said: "When I started at Standard Liege, when I was 17 or 18, I remember big stars like Eric Gerets complaining about how difficult it was if they wanted to take up a better offer abroad. I understood then that it wasn't right. But those were the days when the players complained a lot among themselves but that was all. Nobody ever dared say anything to the coach or the president."

Now, of course, the situation has been reversed. It's the player who calls the shots and Bosman has no regrets. He says: "I'm proud of the fact that no other player will ever need to be in my situation again. I wasn't able to fulfil my playing career but I am grateful that I won my fight. If I had lost then it would have been a personal disaster. I would have sacrificed everything and lost everything."

Bosman is too old to play professionally again and has no interest in reverting to amateur status. The edge of his love for the game has been bruised by the legal battle and the painful discovery about how few other players were prepared to support him. Occasionally he plays charity matches, including games to raise money for relatives of victims of the child murder and abuse scandal that has seared Belgian society.

For the rest of the time, he takes great pride in his cause. Not that he is happy with all the fall-out. But then, his claim was a narrow, personal one which the court process converted into an international catch-all.

Bosman says: "I just pleaded my own case; I didn't decide the ruling. There are certain elements that have sprung from the court ruling with which I don't agree. I regret the effect on youth systems. The European Commission and FIFA need to sort out an agreement about how young players and clubs who develop them should be protected.

"I like the French system whereby a young player is obliged to sign his first professional contract with the club who discovered him and coached him. Then he would be contracted with the club from 16 or 17 until he is 22 or 23 and, if the club wanted to sell in the meantime, they could get some money back for their investment."

The French system is far from perfect, as Arsenal have proved most notably in snatching the young Nicolas Anelka away from Paris Saint-Germain. Bosman took the point but insisted: "All the more important that the European Commission and FIFA agree on a solution."

One of Bosman's concerns about the present situation is the manner in which young players can be exploited. He says: "Big clubs in western Europe can now entice youngsters away at the age of 14 or 15. But they go to a foreign country, maybe they don't speak the language, they miss their family, their football suffers… and they fail to make the most of their ability. It's a big worry but it would be worse if the court case had been lost. After all, freedom has no price."

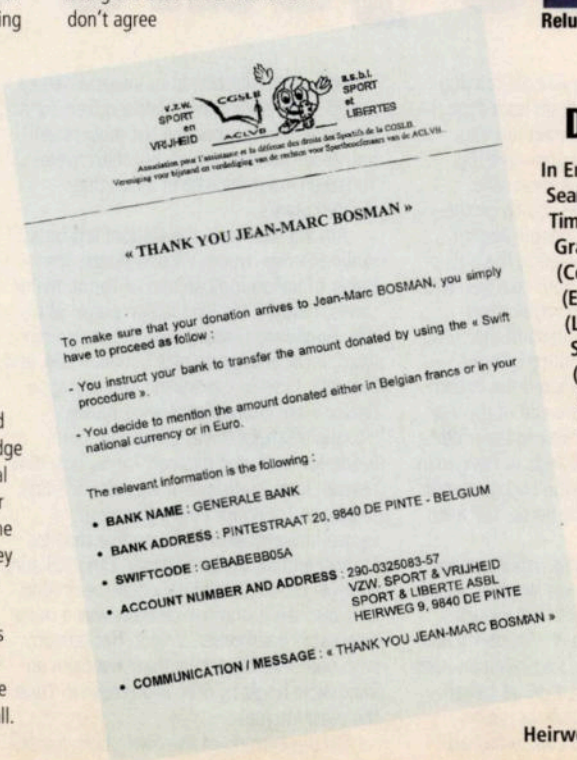
Bosman has no sympathy for present and past national coaches such as Italy's Dino Zoff and Germany's World Cup boss, Berti Vogts, who have complained that the Bosman Ruling has opened the league doors to cheap imports and shut them on promising domestic talent.

He says: "Coaches who lose always need to find excuses but I don't accept the argument. Look at the last four teams in the World Cup last year: France, Brazil, Holland and Croatia – all of them mainly made up of players who were with foreign clubs. It was thanks to the Bosman ruling that those players could move abroad, become better players and lift their countries to being the best in the world. So I don't agree with the argument that young players are being held back. Quite the opposite. It's much easier now for younger players to go abroad and try their luck. The real problem is that players in Italy – or Germany, or England – do not take up the opportunity of going abroad because they can earn better money just sitting on the reserves' bench in their own country. That is their own lack of ambition, not a fault of Bosman."

Lack of ambition also translates as a lack of understanding, which explains why the Bosman financial fund is gathering dust. "Perhaps the big stars need, well, a little more time," he says. "Perhaps they still don't understand."

Perhaps, more to the point, as they enjoy their pop star lifestyle, trying to decide whether it's a day to drive the Ferrari or the Porsche, they do not want to understand. More shame on them.

Reluctant rebel…Jean-Marc Bosman



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Brian Glanville on the disaster that devastated Italian football

Final line-up...The Torino players before their last match, a friendly against Benfica (Beejay Soccer Enterprises)

The Torino tragedy ...50 years on

ON MAY 4, 1949, an aircraft carrying the Torino football team back from a friendly game in Lisbon ran into difficulties in conditions of poor visibility, forsook its path into Turin airport, and crashed into the wall of the church on the hillside of Superga. All 31 people aboard were killed: 18 players, including the bulk of the Italian national team, both coaches, two directors, the trainer, three well-known journalists and all five members of the crew.

The country was traumatised. Torino, *il grande Torino*, had dominated the Italian championship ever since the end of the war; indeed they were on their way to their fifth consecutive title. Under the aegis of Hungarian manager Egri-Erbstein, Torino had mastered the tactics of the third-back game, still alien even to the *azzurri*.

Ironically, Torino's trip to Lisbon, where they'd lost 4-3 to Benfica, was simply a gesture of goodwill. Ferreira, a Benfica player and friend of Valentino Mazzola, the inside-left and captain of Torino and Italy, had fallen on hard times. The game was played on his behalf.

Mazzola died in the crash, as did his fellow inside-forward, Ezio Loik, who had joined Torino with him from Venezia, where they'd made their name. Half-a-dozen Torino players had in fact been in the most recent Italy team to have played, but there were 10 Italian internationals in all on that ill-fated plane.

Among them was the elegant left-back, Virilio Maroso, whom Vittorio Pozzo, the father of Italian football and of Torino themselves, thought the best Italian player of his day. Guglielmo Gabetto was the centre-forward, lucky enough to play between Loik and Mazzola. Eusebio Castigliano and Giuseppe Grezar were international wing-halves.

Giulio Schubert was a Hungary-born inside-forward who'd joined Torino only that season, from Bratislava. It was also the first season at Torino for Emilio Bongiorni, a centre-forward, who had won five caps for France, and for the goalkeeper, Dino Ballarin, younger brother of the Italy right-back Aldo, who also died. Another casualty was a more celebrated goalkeeper, Valerio Bacigalupo, who had been beaten by that shot from an impossible angle by Stan Mortensen in Turin the previous year.

On the evening of the crash, both houses of the Italian Parliament, the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, suspended their sittings as a mark of respect. People wept in the streets of towns and cities all over Italy, and messages of sympathy and condolence poured in from all over the world. The next day, no fewer than 10,000 cars wound their way up the hill where the disaster had happened in a kind of pilgrimage.

The first news of the crash and the identity of the victims had been given by a local, who recognised the Torino shirt that Aldo Ballarin had been wearing. Later, it fell to poor Vittorio Pozzo to identify the bodies of players he had known and nurtured for so long. Indeed, he had been a founder member of the club.

Pozzo wrote most movingly about the terrible experience in the Turin evening newspaper, *La Stampa Sera*. "In the buttonhole of a piece of jacket hanging from a tree stump, up there at Superga, was an international team badge – one of those gold ones, with the new design, which I had still been giving out the previous year, telling them to hold them dear and reverence them,

for there were little more than 200 people in Italy who could wear them. Tenacious was the hold that badge exerted, tenacious unto death, when everything else had gone, blown from the players' bodies, shoes first, then watches, jackets, buttons. Precisely to whom that jacket and that badge belonged, no one knew. To one of the 10 players who had won the blue jersey, and who lay there now, battered to pieces or reduced virtually to pulp."

At the time of the disaster, Torino were four points ahead of their pursuers in the *campionato*, and at the request of five other clubs – Inter, Milan, Padova, Palermo and Venezia – the title was assigned to them. In a sporting gesture, it was also decided that Torino's four remaining games be played by the respective youth teams of the clubs involved. Torino won them all.

Fine words, alas, butter no parsnips. Though the president of the Italian FA, Ottorino Barassi, tearfully announced that his organisation considered "parents, widows, orphans" of the dead as "family", and though it was decided that the receipts of the imminent match between Italy and Austria would go to the relatives of the victims, the club and those families had hard times ahead of them.

Not least the widow of Mazzola, and her two very young sons, Sandro and Ferruccio. Torino did little or nothing to assist them, with the result that when Sandro grew into an outstanding player, there was no chance of Signora Mazzola allowing him to join the club. He went to Inter instead and became a star, while Ferruccio, too, had a decent career. Meanwhile, impoverished Torino were eventually relegated and, having been taken over by a biscuit firm, were obliged to go by the name of Talmone Torino for some time.

Over the years, things improved. In 1961, Denis Law and Joe Baker were brought from Britain, even if they didn't stay for long. Law, despite his dissidence, was widely seen by Torino fans as a still finer inside-forward than Valentino Mazzola. Torino even won another championship in 1976, but the momentum never lasted long. In more recent years, the club has been beset by scandals, especially that which involved the transfer of the international winger Gigi Lentini to Milan, allegedly for £4million more than the amount officially posted. At the moment, Torino are in Serie B again.

It would always have been hard to keep up with Juventus, backed as they are by the Agnelli millions, even without the horrors of Superga and their aftermath. Let the last words be Pozzo's. "They should be buried side by side, so that they can remain together in the future as they have lived together, won fame together, and died together. So that they can continue to form a team in the after-life, too. So that it will be more natural, simple and human to remember them all, when thinking of the greatest tragedy ever to have stricken football, anywhere in the world, wherever it is played."

Munich, alas, was less than nine years away.

FINANCIAL FOOTBALL

Blocked, not beaten

Simon Banks on the Murdoch bid and other media developments

THE BLOCKING of BSkyB's bid to buy Manchester United has been well received by supporters, who see it as a major setback for Rupert Murdoch and other media players in their attempts to secure the game for their companies by buying football clubs. Developments in continental Europe, however, show that the trend is still continuing apace.

French television and film production company Pathe, which has a 17 per cent stake in BSkyB, has bought into Lyon, while the English multi-club owner ENIC has submitted a bid for title-chasing Bordeaux.

The Bordeaux board is considering a rival bid from French commercial TV channel M6, which is controlled by the giant media company CLT-Ufa. M6 is favourite to win the battle.

A successful bid by ENIC could create the same complications which led UEFA to throw AEK Athens out of the UEFA Cup, because ENIC already controlled Slavia Prague, who also had qualified for the competition. That decision was reversed by the Court for Arbitration in Sport, meeting in Lausanne, but UEFA has asked the EC to reverse it again.

Bordeaux also are considering joining the newly formed 'Club Europe', an alliance of five of France's leading clubs: Monaco, Olympique Marseille, Lyon, Lens and Paris Saint-Germain, which has been formed, in partnership with Canal Plus, to exploit the clubs' image rights through several multi-media platforms.

Murdoch, anxious to establish a presence in continental Europe, formed News Corporation Europe. The company then set about an audacious £1.3billion bid for the exclusive rights to all Serie A matches for the next four years. The Italian government responded by passing a law restricting any one broadcaster's ownership of TV rights to 60 per cent.

Murdoch now has been linked once again with an alliance involving Mediaset, owned by Milan president Silvio Berlusconi, and the German Kirch group.

The Pathe stake in BSkyB led to speculation that Murdoch was planning a merger with his main continental rival, Canal Plus. This deal raised the prospect of a UEFA intervention for the same reasons as with ENIC and AEK; Canal Plus owns Paris Saint-Germain and BSkyB were trying to buy Manchester United.

In last September's *World Soccer* we suggested that while the trend for media companies to buy football clubs looked set to gather momentum, primarily because of inflation in the value of TV rights, there also was the possibility that football clubs would form their own television distribution companies. On March 4, four Italian clubs, Fiorentina, Roma, Parma and Lazio, set up a company, Societa Diritti Sportivi (SDS), to market their TV rights.

SDS then took a stake in a digital platform, Stream, which Murdoch had planned to buy if he had been successful in securing the Serie A rights. The SDS deal is significant because it gives clubs ownership of the means of distribution of their product and a share of the profits that arise.

Since Manchester United launched MUTV in September last year, Milan, Real Madrid and Olympique Marseille have started their own TV stations.

This gives rise to the prospect of a mini-super league being broadcast on a pay-per-view basis through the clubs' own channels. There are now four other British clubs with their own channels available through cable – Chelsea, Hearts, Middlesbrough and Wolves – and several others are negotiating with cable operators.

League channels as well as club channels also are possible, and the Premier League is considering setting up its own broadcast company. This development, as much as the prospect of the Restrictive Practices Court ruling that the Premier League is operating as an illegal cartel in the selling of TV rights, motivated Murdoch's bid for United.

Global media players see Europe as an underdeveloped market with massive potential for growth. Digital technology provides the means by which media companies can extract maximum value from that market. In order to do so, however, broadcasters need products with mass appeal. Football, alone among sports, has that appeal in Europe, and broadcasters realise that whoever wins the battle for top-quality football rights will win the war for audiences and subscribers.

Clubs are showing that they are determined to ensure they will be among the victors when the spoils of the war are divided.

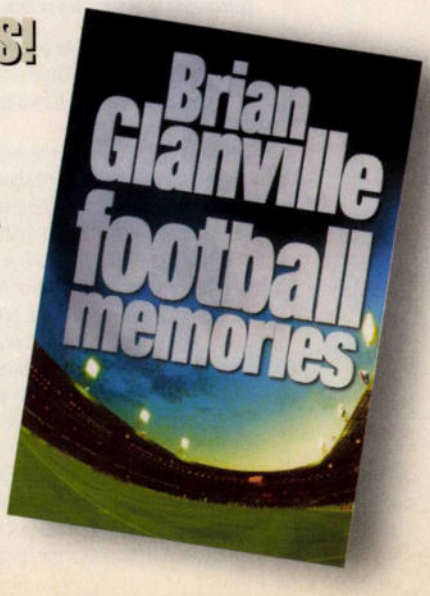
Simon Banks writes for Soccer Investor (www.socceranalyst.com)

WIN FOOTBALL MEMORIES!

We've got 10 copies of Brian Glanville's latest book *Football Memories* to give away.

To win a copy, please answer the following question:
Is Brian Glanville's Sunday morning football team called...
a) Chelsea Casuals
b) Fulham Fops
or c) Latin Lovers?

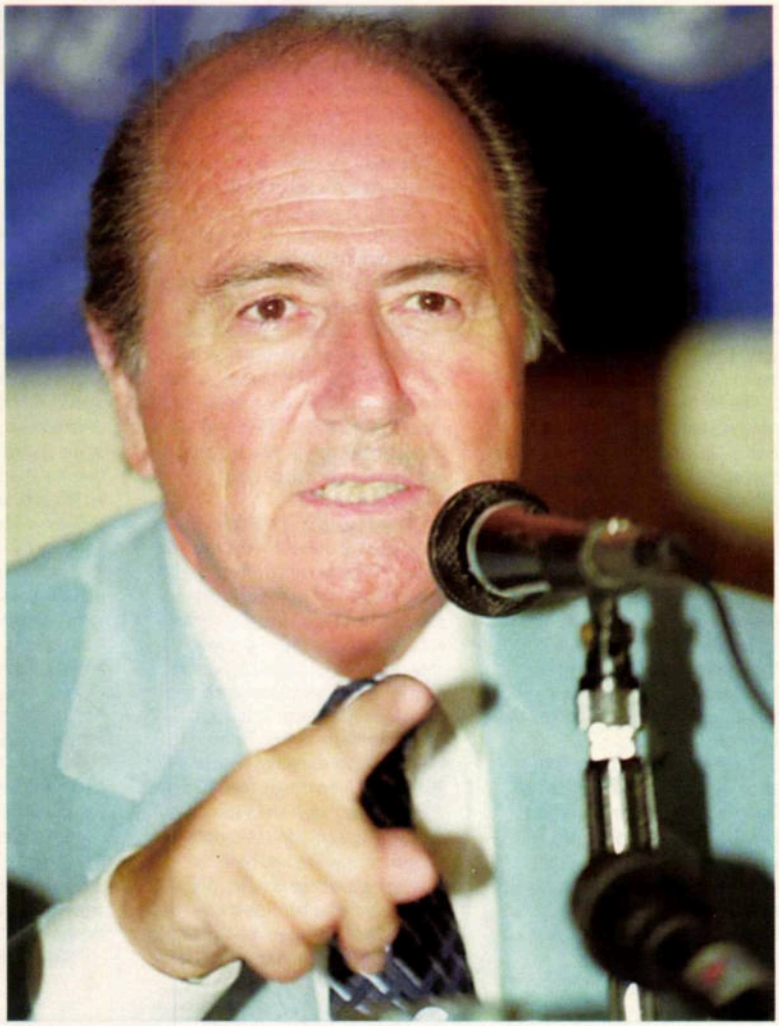
Send your answer (a, b or c) on a postcard to:
***Football Memories* competition**
World Soccer magazine,
24th floor, King's Reach Tower
Stamford St, London SE1 9LS, UK



Entries must reach us by June 30. Usual Ipc Magazines competition rules apply

All things to all football men

But a new book is a blow to boss Blatter. Keir Radnedge reports



Determined to answer the critics...FIFA president Sepp Blatter

NOTHING is more important to FIFA president Sepp Blatter – in football terms, at least – than a unified international calendar.

He sees the project as the key to the game maintaining its pre-eminent sporting role in the new millennium. Enforce a unified calendar and you simplify administration of the world game, you wipe away much of the ill-feeling between clubs and national associations, you ease fixture pressure on players, you maintain an exclusivity about the game which leaves fans wanting more and television always competing to pay more.

At the end of it all, you might even be able to hold a World Cup every two years. But that is a concept on which Blatter is busily soft-pedalling. Maybe, one day, it will be possible. But it is not his priority – far from it, even if that was the impression created by his outspoken new year message.

Blatter does not intend to hang around. He tells me: "FIFA first considered the unified calendar back in 1994 but then we went to sleep on the idea. Congress last year then gave me a mandate to make this a priority which is why we have attacked this problem since I became president.

"The aim is to ensure there is less football without cutting into the various international competitions. We have to make sure first that the regional championships are played at the same time in all the confederations.

"We will need 18 months to get this harmonisation and that will be possible only with some give and take from everybody involved. It's quite feasible and everybody is in support of the idea of a co-ordinated calendar, including UEFA. By the end of this year we should have a first draft of our proposal. My aim is to put it before congress next year to have it ready to be adopted by the entire football family as soon as possible after that."

The vital ingredient, for Blatter, is turning the regional championships – Copa America, African Nations Cup, European Championship – into qualifying events for the World Cup. The regional events would be staged in the even-numbered years with the World Cup switching to an odd-number year schedule. This might mean a World Cup in 2006 being followed by a World Cup in 2009.

"Bringing the tournament schedules together," says Blatter, "could take between 600 and 700 matches out of the international schedule. That is good for the quality of football because it will allow players more time for proper rest and recuperation."

The Blatter Plan, incidentally, also means that the controversial Confederations Cup being staged in Mexico at the end of July and start of August will be the last. As Blatter says: "I cannot see how the Confederations Cup will find a place in the new co-ordinated calendar." He does not sound particularly regretful about that.

Blatter denies wanting to force leagues to cut top division sizes to 16 or 18 or even wanting to dictate a February to November season – rumours which shocked European officials who were still licking their wounds after Lennart Johansson's failure to win the FIFA presidency.

He says: "I have said that 16 would be an ideal size because we must cut down the amount of football played to maintain its quality and protect players' health. But FIFA cannot dictate such things. FIFA's dialogue is with the national associations and the leagues must remain subordinate to the associations. I was merely asked my opinion on the ideal size of a league and I said 16 or 18. It was not meant to be an order or even a confirmed idea.

"In England and Spain, for example, they have 20 teams in the top division. Well, if they want to stay with 20 teams when we have the international calendar, that is up to them. But many clubs will be playing two or three times a week. I wonder if the players will be so happy? But it is not for FIFA to interfere. Once FIFA and the confederations have agreed the shape and rhythm of the co-ordinated calendar then it is up to the individual national associations to adjust – and because of climate, contracts and all the rest they will have different needs.

"At FIFA, we are enablers, not dictators."

Blatter appears, at last, to be settling down

into the presidential role after a bumpy initial ride when the initial euphoria of accession appeared to be getting the better of him. He was elected president in Paris on the eve of the World Cup finals after a controversial struggle against the forces of European football as represented by Johansson, Swedish president of UEFA.

Blatter's victory was surprisingly decisive, Johansson throwing in the towel before a second vote and thus confirming Blatter's seizure of the crown worn for 24 years by the coldly imperious Brazilian, Joao Havelange.

Many delegates from Africa, Asia and the Americas – who had benefited from Havelange's dictatorial regime – considered a vote for Blatter as a vote for continuity. Blatter did not mind. But he had a more expansive agenda than might have been expected from the man who had been Havelange's loyal general secretary and aide for 20 years.

The trouble is, while Blatter wants to create what even he calls in English "New FIFA", he is bedevilled by the shadows of old FIFA in the shape of a book by British author David Yallop, entitled *FIFA and the Media; how they stole the game.* This contains a string of unsavoury allegations, mostly about Havelange.

Blatter went to court in Switzerland and Holland to seek a ban on the sale of the book or, at the least, the removal of 16 sections in which he thought he was unjustly criticised – most notably over events surrounding his presidential election victory as well as his role in the World Cup tickets farago.

"By going to court I suppose I have inadvertently helped to publicise the book," says Blatter. "But it was an unfair attack – I had to defend myself and FIFA from both ethical and moral points of view.

"If I and FIFA had sat on my hands and said nothing then people would have thought there must be some truth in these claims – which there is not. But if the author thinks he has any proof then let him bring it forward."

The catch for Blatter is that, having submitted his complaint to the ponderous Swiss legal system, he can do nothing more.

When asked why FIFA cannot set up a commission to confront the issue, he says: "Now that the process is *sub judice*. FIFA cannot enter into the legal process. The matter has been placed with the court – either the author justifies his allegations or he must remove the passages which criticise me. In the meantime there is nothing to do but sit and wait."

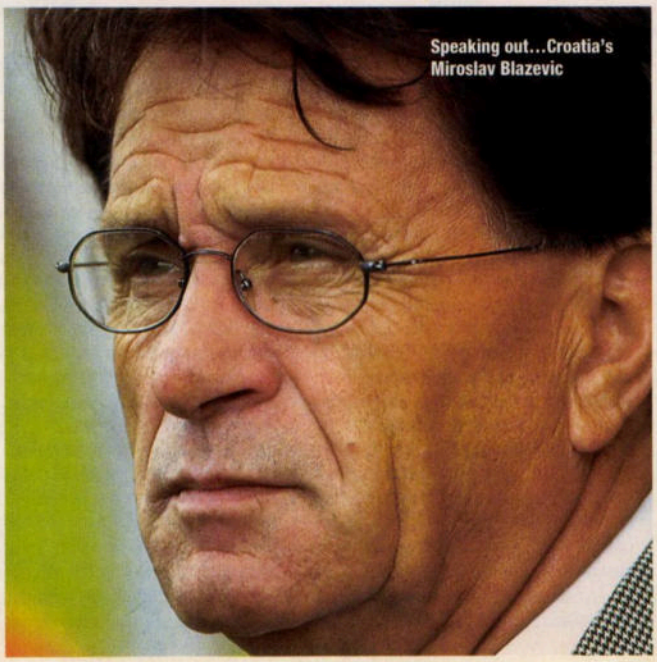
That is anathema. He wants to be all things to world football: a leader and a worker, a reformer and a steady hand. He does not need distractions which take up too much of his time and deflect him from ensuring that football is the world's No.1 sport for the new millennium as it has been for the last century of the old.

Lest we forget...Liverpool players past and present, plus officials and fans, paying tribute to the 96 Hillsborough victims at an Anfield service marking the tenth anniversary of English football's worst disaster.

Overheard...

"NATO saved Yugoslavia. We would have destroyed their national pride by beating them in Belgrade and that would have been an even harder strike for them to take than NATO bombing."

Croatia national coach Miroslav Blazevic, never one to mince his words, does his bit for the Balkan peace process.



Speaking out...Croatia's Miroslav Blazevic

Colombia kid arrives

A GOALLESS draw between Venezuela and Colombia in Maracaibo was notable for one record: the appearance of 16-year-old Johnnier Montano as a second-half substitute.

The Colombian kid became the second-youngest South American international ever, beaten only by Diego Maradona, who was 10 days short of his 16th birthday when he made his debut for Argentina in 1976.

Boxing clever

Limerick FC have got money from an unusual source for their Soccer Academy. Former world boxing champion George Foreman, a friend of Father Joe Young, who keeps the club ticking over, recently visited the city and donated £40,000 to local worthy causes.

Viva Espana!

Brian Homewood reports from Nigeria on a victory for Spain in the 12th World Youth Cup

Going for gold...Spain celebrate their Final win

THE WORLD YOUTH CUP has been derided as a waste of time but champions Spain, second-placed Japan and third-placed Mali will not agree.

Spain, whose young players rarely get a chance to play top-class football in their own country because foreign imports stop them getting into the teams, won the competition with an overwhelming 4-0 win over Japan in the Final.

Japan's performance until then gave them belief that they can perform creditably in 2002, while Mali manager Mamadou Coulibaly said his team's third place was the greatest moment in his country's footballing history.

The Spanish team which won the tournament was made up of players who are either reserves at clubs such as Barcelona and Real Socieded or play in the second or third divisions. Spain were clearly the best team, winning six and drawing one of their seven matches, and thoroughly deserved their first title in the 22 years the tournament has been going.

Manager Inaki Saez said their performance aroused intense interest and it showed that Spain has new talent coming through. The problem is that the clubs don't allow it to develop.

"We have shown that in Spanish football, the clubs are doing a good job at the grass roots level but they don't carry on the work at senior level. Instead, they buy foreigners," he said.

Japan manager Philippe Troussier, who unusually among those at the tournament is also in charge of the senior team, was equally happy. He said the results have improved his standing with the federation, giving him more say in things such as who the team should play in friendlies, and has helped him begin what he sees as his main task, namely to change the mentality of the players.

"I believe there are five or six players who could play in the World Cup," he said. "It is difficult for them to express themselves, they are very disciplined. Sometimes they need to make decisions, to change their ways."

"But the group is changing all the time. Now they sing after the matches. I have given them a new attitude, to celebrate victories and to be angry when the situation is not good. "

Mali, a landlocked Saharan country where the city of Timbuktu is located, were also deserving of third place. They beat Uruguay twice (in the first round and third-place match), Portugal, Cameroon and the hosts Nigeria. Mahamadou Dissa ended as joint top scorer with five goals, alongside Spain's Pablo Gonzalez.

Other countries either did not take the competition seriously or seemed to lose interest. England, Germany and Argentina, winners of the last two championships, all brought below-strength squads and none made it beyond the second round.

Mexico performed superbly until the quarter-finals when they bowed out against Japan with a lethargic performance. Similarly, Brazil were often electrifying but then lost to a ridiculous penalty in their quarter-final with Uruguay.

Much attention was focused on the Nigerian organisation. Would Africa's most populous nation prove capable of putting on the event? One year ago, FIFA vice-president Jack Warner had said no way after a visit to inspect facilities. The fact that it went ahead at all, he said, was "the eighth wonder of the world".

In the event, the stadiums and training facilities were up to scratch, no players caught a nasty tropical disease and there were no security scares. But it could hardly be said that everything went smoothly. Two games were interrupted by powercuts and two more ended with pitch invasions, in one of which some fans attempted to strip Nigerian players of their jewellery.

Travelling around was a nightmare, especially after one of the two British Airways jets suffered an engine failure. Brazil and Croatia ended up on a local flight but could only leave after the squads had a whip round to buy fuel.

National anthems were so badly played that the army band was sacked halfway through and replaced by tapes.

Troussier, who has 10 years of experience in Africa, said such inconveniences have to be expected. "Europe is Europe. Africa is Africa. If we organise a World Cup in Africa, we have to remember that it is Africa. You can't change the climate, the culture, the mosquitos, the traditional habits," he said.

"Sometimes, you have to wait a minute more, the air conditioning breaks down. But it is good to see the differences, it is a rich experience for everyone."

THE FINAL

Apr 24 - Lagos
Spain 4 (Barkero 5, Pablo 14, 30, Gabriel Garcia de la Torre 51
Japan 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Sanchez (Arg)
Spain: Aranzubia - Coira, Jusue, Marchena, Bermudo, Orbaiz, Varela (Ruben 63), Xavi, Barkero (Aganza 80), Gabriel Garcia de la Torre (Colsa 70), Pablo Gonzalez.
Japan: Minami - Sakai, Tsujimoto, Teshima, Nakata, Ogasawara, Motoyama, Endo, Ujiie (Inamoto 46), Nagai (Takada 69), Takahara (Bando 56).

Bags of promise...Ronaldo (no relation) was one of Brazil's stars

Brazil still brimming with talent

DIEGO MARADONA, Dunga and Bebeto are among the players who have used the World Youth Cup as a springboard to greater things. This time Argentina, on the admission of manager Jose Peckerman, had no new Maradona. The defending champions, one of the teams who left their top players at home, crashed to Mexico in the second round and scored only two goals in the process. Only captain and midfielder Esteban Cambiasso really impressed.

Brazil, on the other hand, were brimming with talent and should really have gone all the way. Fabio Bilica, already in Italy with Venezia, was excellent in the centre of the defence. Fabio Aurelio, who is a reserve to Serginho at Sao Paulo, was head and shoulders above the other left-backs, and there was even a Ronaldo playing in attack – absolutely no relation to his more famous namesake but with plenty of potential.

Likewise, Paraguay had three of the best players – defender Paulo da Silva, midfielder Nelson Cuevas and striker Roque Santa Cruz.

Da Silva, based with Italy's Perugia, is the son of a former Brazilian footballer who settled in Asuncion after finishing his career there but was killed in a freak accident during a veterans' game several years ago.

Cuevas, a 20-year-old from Argentina's River Plate, created plenty of chances with his weaving runs. Roque Santa Cruz, only 17 but already the subject of £7million offers from Europe and a regular goalscorer for his club, Olimpia, was perhaps the most impressive striker in Nigeria, allying strength and close control.

Barcelona may find they do not need so many foreign players if strikers Garci and Xavi can carry on where they left off in Nigeria. Both were instrumental in helping their country to the Final, while Fernando Varela, a reserve at Real Madrid, and Saludes Barkero from Real Sociedad, were also outstanding.

Japan captain Shinji Ono, the only player in Nigeria to have played at the last World Cup, was extremely impressive in midfield but let himself down when he was suspended from the final for timewasting in the semi-final against Uruguay.

Mali's Mahamadou Dissa, who generally played as a substitute, was top scorer with five goals, which may soon deprive Stade Malien of his services. He was followed on four goals by Uruguay's Ernesto Chevanton and Taylor Twellman of the United States, who still plays college soccer with the University of Maryland.

A player who had less time to shine was Kazakhstan goalkeeper David Loriya. Although his team conceded nine goals in three games, he prevented them from a heavy opening defeat against Argentina with some outstanding saves.

Ghana's Peter Ofori-Quaye, Ireland's Damien Duff, Portugal's Paulo Costa and David Suazo of Honduras also stood out.

RESULTS

FIRST ROUND

GROUP A

03-04-99.....Nigeria-Costa Rica.....1-1
04-04-99.....Germany-Paraguay.....4-0
07-04-99.....Nigeria-Germany 2-0
07-04-99.....Costa Rica-Paraguay.....1-3
10-04-99.....Nigeria-Paraguay 1-2
10-04-99.....Costa Rica-Germany.....2-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
*Paraguay	3	2	0	1	5	6	6
*Nigeria	3	1	1	1	4	3	4
*Costa Rica	3	1	1	1	4	5	4
Germany	3	1	0	2	5	4	3

* qualifies for second round

GROUP B

TEAM
04-04-99.....Ghana-Croatia.....1-1
04-04-99.....Argentina-Kazakhstan...1-0
07-04-99.....Ghana-Argentina 1-0
07-04-99.....Croatia-Kazakhstan.....5-1
10-04-99.....Ghana-Kazakhstan 3-0
10-04-99.....Croatia-Argentina.....0-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
*Ghana	3	2	1	0	5	1	7
*Croatia	3	1	2	0	6	2	5
*Argentina	3	1	1	1	1	1	4
Kazakhstan	3	0	0	3	1	9	0

* qualifies for second round

GROUP C

04-04-99.....Australia-Saudi Arabia ..3-1
04-04-99.....Mexico-Rep Ireland 1-0
07-04-99.....Australia-Mexicom 1-3
07-04-99.....Saudi Arabia-Rep Ireland..0-2
10-04-99.....Australia-Rep Ireland ...0-4
10-04-99.....Saudi Arabia-Mexico 1-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
*Mexico	3	2	1	0	5	2	7
*Rep Ireland	3	2	0	1	6	1	6
Australia	3	1	0	2	4	8	3
Saudi Arabia	3	0	1	2	2	6	1

*qualifies for second round

GROUP D

05-04-99.....Uruguay-Mali.....1-2
05-04-99.....S Korea-Portugal.....1-3
08-04-99.....Uruguay-S Korea 1-0
08-04-99.....Mali-Portugal.....2-1
11-04-99.....Uruguay-Portugal 0-0
11-04-99.....Mali-S Korea.....2-4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
*Mali	3	2	0	1	6	6	6
*Portugal	3	1	1	1	4	3	4
*Uruguay	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
S Korea	3	1	0	2	5	6	3

* qualifies for second round

GROUP E

05-04-99.....Cameroon-Japan 2-1
05-04-99.....England-United States...0-1
08-04-99.....Cameroon-England 1-0
08-04-99.....Japan-United States 3-1
11-04-99.....Cameroon-United States...1-3
11-04-99..... Japan-England 2-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
*Japan	3	2	0	1	6	3	6
*US	3	2	0	1	5	4	6
*Cameroon	3	2	0	1	4	4	6
England	3	0	0	3	0	4	0

* qualifies for second round

GROUP F

05-04-99.....Zambia-Honduras 4-3
05-04-99.....Spain-Brazil.....2-0
08-04-99.....Zambia-Spain 0-0
08-04-99.....Honduras-Brazil 0-3
11-04-99.....Zambia-Brazil.....1-5
11-04-99.....Honduras-Spain.....1-3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
*Spain	3	2	1	0	5	1	7
*Brazil	3	2	0	1	8	3	6
Zambia	3	1	1	1	5	8	4
Honduras	3	0	0	3	4	10	0

* qualifies for second round

SECOND ROUND

14-04-99.....Rep Ireland-Nigeria 1-1
Nigeria 5-3 on pens
14-04-99.....Ghana-Costa Rica 2-0
14-04-99.....Paraguay-Uruguay.....2-2
Uruguay 10-9 on pens
14-04-99.....Brazil-Croatia 4-0
15-04-99.....Japan-Portugal.....1-1
Japan 5-4 on pens
15-04-99.....Spain-United States.....3-2
15-04-99.....Mexico-Argentina 4-1
15-04-99.....Mali-Cameroon.....5-4 aet

QUARTER-FINALS

18-04-99.....Uruguay-Brazil 2-1
18-04-99.....Mali-Nigeria.....3-1
18-04-99.....Japan-Mexico.....2-0
18-04-99.....Spain-Ghana 1-1
Spain 8-7 on pens

SEMI-FINALS

21-04-99.....Mali-Spain 1-3
21-04-99.....Uruguay-Japan 1-2

THIRD PLACE

24-04-99.....Uruguay-Mali 0-1

FINAL

24-04-99.....Japan-Spain 0-4

Opening with a win...the USA celebrate their defeat of England

Coach Tunde pays an early price

FIRST ROUND

GROUP A

Germany, who declined to bring their top players, finished bottom after losing to both Nigeria and Costa Rica. This was despite steam-rollering Paraguay 4-0 in their first match, with Enrico Kern scoring a hat-trick.

Unfortunately for Germany, Kern pulled a hamstring and took no further part in the competition. Paraguay, who had dominated early on but fell apart in the second half of that game, recovered their confidence to beat Costa Rica 3-1 and the host nation 2-1 to win the group.

Nigeria sacked coach Tunde Disa immediately after the Paraguay game but within an hour of this they qualified. Costa Rica's 2-1 win over Germany allowed the hosts to finish second and sent the Central Americans through as one of the best third-placed teams.

GROUP B

A goal by Peter Ofori-Quaye gave Ghana a 1-0 win over defending champions Argentina in the group's top game. Ghana, Croatia and Argentina all beat Kazakhstan comfortably, and the Ghana-Croatia and Croatia-Argentina matches were drawn. This meant that Ghana finished top, Croatia were second and Argentina scraped through as one of the third-placed teams.

GROUP C

Ireland claimed that the power failure which interrupted their opening game, against Mexico, cost them at least a point. They were a goal down when the lights went out but were fighting back.

FIFA president Sepp Blatter was among those plunged into darkness and the incident severely embarrassed the hosts. When the lights came back on, Mexico held out to win.

Mexico went on to beat Australia, 3-1 winners over Saudi Arabia, to claim their second-round place and then drew with Saudi Arabia, who gratefully picked up their only point.

Ireland took second place thanks to a 4-0 hammering of Australia, who finished third but were knocked out.

GROUP D

This group produced the ugliest match of the tournament. Portugal and Uruguay met in their last game knowing that a draw would put both into the next round. To nobody's surprise, the match ended 0-0. There were a couple of timid scoring attempts in the first half, but after the break the teams took it in turns to knock the ball around in their own half.

By this time, surprise package Mali had beaten both of them to guarantee a second-round place. Uruguay and Portugal both beat South Korea, but the Asians went out in style, defeating Mali 4-2 in an admittedly meaningless final game.

GROUP E

England made a quick exit and were the only team not to score in the tournament. Single-goal defeats by the United States and Cameroon were followed by a 2-0 loss to Japan in what was arguably the weakest group. The other teams all finished on six points after Cameroon beat Japan, Japan beat the US and the US beat Cameroon.

GROUP F

Along with Group A, this pool produced the most entertainment. It started with Zambia beating Honduras 4-3 in a thriller and Spain startling Brazil 2-0, the goals coming from Barcelona's Gabri.

Brazil bounced back to beat Honduras 3-0, Sao Paulo midfielder Edu scoring twice, while Zambia and Spain drew 0-0.

Like Portugal and Uruguay in Group D, Brazil and Zambia both needed a draw from their final meeting, but instead of settling for a cosy draw, they went at each other hell for leather from the outset. Andrew Sinkala gave the Africans the lead early on, but Brazil hit back to win 5-1.

Zambia finished third, but this result made such a dent in their goal difference that they went out. Spain made sure of top spot with a 3-1 win over Honduras, who nevertheless played their part. Coming so soon after Hurricane Mitch devastated their country, the Hondurans did well just to get to Nigeria.

Mexico put out Argentina

SECOND ROUND

HOLDERS Argentina were crushed 4-1 by Mexico, who produced some dazzling football to come back after going behind in the first half in Ibadan.

Goals of the highest quality, from Daniel Osorno, Luis Gonzalez, Juan Pablo Rodriguez and Eduardo Rodriguez, sent the Mexicans through after Luciano Galletti had put Argentina ahead with only their second goal of the tournament.

Brazil appeared to have found their rhythm as they demolished Croatia 4-0 with a virtuoso display in Calabar. Two of the goals came from Ronaldo, absolutely no relation to his namesake, and one each from Edu and Fernando Baiano.

Nigeria, Uruguay and Japan all went through to the quarter-finals after penalty shoot-outs, while Mali continued their run by producing the only golden-goal win.

They came from 4-2 down to force a 4-4 draw with Cameroon in Enugu, then won when Mahamadou Dissa took advantage of a defensive mess-up to score in the 105th minute, his second goal of the game and fourth of the tournament. Three players were sent off.

Nigeria went through 5-3 on penalties after drawing 1-1 with the Irish in Kano, a game that was regrettably followed by a pitch invasion in which thieves joined soccer fans and attempted to strip Nigerian players of their jewellery.

Ireland manager Brian Kerr said his team would have won in cooler conditions.

Portugal played the whole of extra time against Japan with 10 men and defender Ricardo Esteves in goal after Sergio Leite was carried off injured with his team having made three substitutions.

Paulo Costa, Portugal's best player and scorer of their 81st-minute equaliser, missed the crucial penalty as Japan went through in the shoot-out.

Roque Santa Cruz played a similar hero-villain role for Paraguay. He scored both goals as they came from two down to draw with Uruguay after extra time, but missed the decisive penalty as Uruguay won a marathon shoot-out 10-9.

In the other game, Spain took a three-goal half-time lead against the United States through Pablo Gonzalez (two) and Xavier Hernandez. In a dramatic second half, Taylor Twellman pulled an early goal back, was twice denied by goalkeeper Daniel Aranzubia, and then scored again in injury time.

Cesar dives to conquer

QUARTER-FINALS

THIS STAGE of the tournament turned out to be pretty disastrous for the organisers. First of all, the host nation were eliminated as unsung Mali pulled off yet another surprise with a 3-1 win in Enugu, their goals coming from Mamadou Bagayoko (two), the first after 58 seconds, and Mamadou Diarra.

Then there was another floodlight failure: the victims this time were Spain and Ghana, whose game, in Kaduna, was halted for 10 minutes just before half-time. It eventually went to penalties after Peter Ofori-Quaye scored his fourth goal of the competition with a deflected shot in the last minute, to equalise Saludes Barkero's 53rd-minute penalty.

In Ibadan, fans invaded the pitch after the Japan-Mexico match, chased the Japan team into their dressing-room and attacked photographers who were trying to transmit pictures. On the pitch Japan stunned Mexico with two goals in the first 25 minutes, by Masashi Motoyama and captain Shinji Ono. Mexico played without inspiration and never looked like scoring.

In Lagos, Brazil and Uruguay played to an empty stadium, even though the Nigeria game was not shown on TV in an attempt to encourage fans to go.

Sadly for the tournament, Brazil were knocked out, losing to a late and hugely controversial penalty. When Uruguay captain Cesar Pellegrin dived in the 86th minute, it was so badly executed that most supporters expected him to get booked. But the referee pointed to the spot and Nestor Canobbio fired home.

Brazil had played flowing football in the first half but managed only one goal, by Fernando Baiano. Uruguay equalised on half-time through Jorge Anchen in only their second serious attack.

What a surprise...Mali defeat Portugal on their way to the second round

Thick of the action...Japan and Uruguay tussle for a place in the Final

Ono! I'll miss the Final

SEMI-FINALS

MALI'S dream was ended by Spain in Kaduna but Japan continued their amazing run by overcoming Uruguay 2-1 to reach the Final. Two goals in the first half-hour by Betis reserve Fernando Varela put Spain in control and he was denied a first-half hat-trick when another goal was disallowed.

Mahamadou Dissa reduced the arrears shortly after the break with his fifth goal of the tournament, but Spain withstood a brief period of Mali pressure, and an injury-time goal by Xavier Hernandez, or 'Xavi', gave them a 3-1 win.

All the excitement in the other match came in the first 35 minutes. Japan took the initiative and deservedly went in front in the 23rd minute when Naohiro Takahara scored from close range. But a minute later Ernesto Chevanton equalised after Japan failed to clear a cross from the left.

Yuichiro Nagai put Japan back ahead in the 35th minute but after that the game degenerated as the Asians played Uruguay at their own game.

Japan fell back into defence and had three players booked for time-wasting including captain Shinji Ono, who missed the Final through suspension as a result. Uruguay, uncomfortable at having to take the initiative, created few real chances and had four more players booked, including Ernesto Chevanton for diving in the penalty area.

WORLD YOUTH CUP SQUADS NIGERIA 1999

ARGENTINA
1 COSTANZO Franco (G, River Plate)
2 ROLDAN Carlos (D, Lanus)
3 MILITO Gabriel (D, Independiente)
4 FERNANDEZ Juan (D, Estudiantes)
5 CAMBIASSO Esteban (M, Independiente)
6 CROSA Fernando (D, Newell's Old Boys)
7 GALLETTI Luciano (F, Estudiantes)
8 DUSCHER Aldo (M, Sporting Lisbon, Por)
9 PERALTA Sixto (F, Huracan)
10 MONTENEGRO Daniel (F, Huracan)
11 RIVAROLA German (D, Rosario Central)
12 SAJA Diego (G, San Lorenzo)
13 VILLARREAL Javier (M, Talleres Cordoba)
14 GRABINSKI Cristian (D, Newell's Old Boys)
15 ZUBELDIA Luis (M, Lanus)
16 FARIAS Ernesto (F, Estudiantes)
17 FLORES CORONEL Sebastian (F, Rosario Central)
18 INSUA Federico (F, Argentinos Juniors)

AUSTRALIA
1 BREADEN Anthony (G, Adelaide City)
2 EMERTON Brett (D, Sydney Olympic)
3 WILSON Lindsay (D, Canberra Cosmos)
4 COLOSIMO Simon (D, Carlton)
5 BOSNAR Eddy (D, Northern Spirit)
6 WEARNE Paul (D, Northern Spirit)
7 CULINA Jason (M, Sydney Olympic)
8 GRELLA Vince (M, Empoli, Ita)
9 BRESCIANO Mark (M, Carlton)
10 MAISANO John (F, Westerlo, Blg)
11 STERJOVSKI Mile (F, Sydney Utd)
12 TERMINELLO David (M, Adelaide City)
13 CUNICO Michael (D, Northern Spirit)
14 INVINCIBILE Danny (F, Marconi)
15 CARE Christian (M, Marconi)
16 GRIFFITHS Joel (F, Sydney Utd)
17 BYRNES Mark (D, NSW Institute Sport)
18 TURNBULL Michael (G, Aus Institute Sport)

BRAZIL
1 JULIO CESAR (G, Flamengo)
2 INDIO (D, Corinthians)
3 JUAN (D, Flamengo)
4 FABIO BILICA (D, Venezia, Ita)
5 FERRUGEM (M, Palmeiras)
6 FABIO AURELIO (D, Sao Paulo)
7 RONALDO (F, Gremio)
8 ALEXANDRE (M, Sao Paulo)
9 FERNANDO BAIANO (F, Corinthians)
10 EDU (M, Sao Paulo)
11 MATUZALEM (M, Vitoria)
12 FABIO (G, Uniao Bandeirantes)
13 MANCINI (D, Atletico Mineiro)
14 MILTON ROGERIO (D, Parana Clube)
15 TIAGO (M, Palmeiras)
16 RODRIGO GRAL (F, Juventude)
17 GEOVANI (F, Cruzeiro)
18 FERNANDO (D, Flamengo)

CAMEROON
1 KAMENI Idris Carlos (G, Le Havre, Fra)
2 MODO ABOUNA Thierry (F, Canon de Yaounde)
3 HAMGA Innocent (D, Cotonsport Garoua)
4 LEBE Clement (D, Racing)
5 MOUSSONGUI Benoit Fils (D, Racing)
6 NZINKEU Nj. Hugues (M, FOYU Baham)
7 MBAMI Modeste (M, Dynamo)
8 INOGUE Samuel Alain (F, Racing)
9 KIOYO Adissa Francis (F, Union Douala)
10 DIKOUME ESSINDI Francois (F, FOYU Baham)
11 KOMOL Gaspard (F, Dynamo)
12 IDRISSOU Mohamadou (F, Racing)
13 TCHEUTCHOUA Jean-Pierre (D, Dynamo)
14 NGOM KOME Daniel (F, Cotonsport Garoua)
15 IBRAHIMA Salifou (D, Cotonsport Garoua)
16 NDJAMA BAYIHA Gilbert (G, Red Star, Fra)
17 BIKOI Daniel (M, Sable)
18 TABI William (M, Sable)

COSTA RICA
1 VILLEGAS Jairo (G, Liberia)
2 GARITA Mauricio (D, Heredia)
3 RODRIGUEZ Pablo (M, Guanacaste)
4 MELENDEZ Allan (D, Saprissa)
5 CASTRO Alexander (D, Alajuela)
6 MARTINEZ Gilberto (D, Saprissa)
7 ALPIZAR Mauricio (M, Ramonense)
8 SANTANA Esteban (F, Saprissa)
9 UGARTE Jose Humberto (M, Liberia)
10 DIAZ Minor (M, Santa Barbara)
11 FONSECA Dany (M, Cartago)
12 ARIAS Roberth (D, Heredia)
13 BRENES Alberto (D, Cartago)
14 VIQUEZ Mario (M, Alajuela)
15 ESQUIVEL Juan (D, Saprissa)
16 PARKS Winston (F, Libre)
17 VENEGAS Luis (M, Plaza Acosta)
18 CRUZ Greivin (G, Perez Zeledon)

CROATIA
1 PLETIKOSA Stipe (G, Hajduk Split)
2 MILADIN Darko (D, Hajduk Split)
3 POLOVANEC Kristijan (D, Croatia Zagreb)
4 SABLIC Goran (D, Hajduk Split)
5 MIJATOVIC Andre (D, Rijeka)
6 SERIC Anthony (M, Hajduk Split)
7 MIKIC Mihael (F, Croatia Zagreb)
8 VRANJES Jurica (M, Osijek)
9 BUDAN Igor (F, Rijeka)
10 BALATINAC Josip (M, Osijek)
11 DERANJA Zvonimir (F, Hajduk Split)
12 SUNARA Hrvoje (G, Hajduk Split)
13 SABOLCKI Silvester (D, Varteks)
14 ANDRIC Srdan (M, Hajduk Split)
15 BANOVIC Ivica (M, Zagreb)
16 BJELANOVIC Sasa (F, Zadarkomerc)
17 VUKOVIC Hrvoje (D, Hajduk Split)
18 LOVREK Kruno (F, Zagreb)

ENGLAND
1 TAYLOR Stuart (G, Arsenal)
2 LINCOLN Greg (D, Arsenal)
3 COLE Ashley (D, Arsenal)
4 WRIGHT Stephen (D, Liverpool)
5 HASLAM Stephen (D, Sheffield Wednesday)
6 MURPHY Neil (D, Liverpool)
7 CROUCH Peter (M, Tottenham Hotspur)
8 JOHNSON Andrew (F, Birmingham City)
9 DUDLEY Craig (F, Notts County)
10 PIERCY John (F, Tottenham Hotspur)
11 ETHERINGTON Matthew (F, Peterborough Utd)
12 CHAMBERS Adam (D, West Bromwich Albion)
13 RACHUBKA Paul (G, Manchester Utd)
14 CHAMBERS James (D, West Bromwich Albion)
15 NICHOLLS Kevin (M, Charlton Athletic)
16 COOPER Richard (M, Nottingham Forest)
17 VERNAZZA Paolo (M, Arsenal)
18 OLIVER Adam (M, West Bromwich Albion)

GERMANY
1 HILDEBRAND Timo (G, VfB Stuttgart)
2 ROSEN Alexander (D, Eintracht Frankfurt)
3 SCHRAMM Thorsten (D, MSV Duisburg)
4 RAPP Marcel (D, Karlsruhe)
5 LECHNER Thomas (D, Kaiserslautern)
6 STUCKMANN Michael (D, Wattenscheid 09)
7 VOSS Andreas (M, Bayer Leverkusen)
8 ROTHHOLZ Michael (M, Borussia Dortmund)
9 MUTZEL Michael (M, Eintracht Frankfurt)
10 FALK Patrick (M, Bayer Leverkusen)
11 SCHAPER Tobias (M, Borussia Dortmund)
12 WESSELS Stefan (G, Bayern Munich)
13 KAUL Sebastian (M, Uerdingen)
14 FORKEL Martin (M, Greuther Fuerth)
15 TIMM Christian (F, Borussia Dortmund)
16 KERN Enrico (F, Tennis Borussia Berlin)
17 YILMAZ Mahmut (F, Hamburg)
18 GENSLER Andreas (F, Bayer Leverkusen)

GHANA
1 ADJEI Sam (G, Hearts of Oak)
2 ABDUL Karim (D, Kongsvinger, Nor)
3 GYAN Baffour (F, Kalamata, Gre)
4 AMOAKO Kofi (D, Goldfields)
5 ISSAH A Rahman (D, Udinese, Ita)
6 RAZAK Abdul (M, Dwarfs)
7 ABDULAI Mohammed (F, Borussia Dortmund, Ger)
8 HAMZA Mohammed (D, RTU)
9 AMUZU Teophilus (M, Standard Liege, Blg)
10 APPIAH Stephen (M, Udinese, Ita)
11 ANSAH Aziz (M, Harelbeke, Blg)
12 LARYEA Kingston (M, Olympics)
13 EKU Johnson (F, Electricity)
14 ADU Tutu (F, Grazer AK, Aut)
15 BLAY George (D, Standard Liege, Blg)
16 BOATENG Osei (G, Olympics)
17 OFORI-QUAYE Peter (F, Olympiakos, Gre)
18 AFRIYIE Owusu (F, Malaga, Spa)

HONDURAS
1 PEREZ Javier (G, Independiente)
2 CONTRERAS Eddy (M, Olimpia)
3 VASQUEZ Gerson (D, Melgar)
4 IZAGUIRRE Junior (D, Motagua)
5 VALLECILLO Eric (D, Real Espana)
6 LINO Carlos (D, Victoria)
7 RAUDALES Juan Carlos (D, Motagua)
8 TILGUATH Reynaldo (F, Olimpia)
9 SUAZO David (F, Olimpia)
10 LEON Julio (F, Platense)
11 GUTIERREZ Hector (F, Real Espana)
12 SUAZO Maynor (M, Marathon)
13 MARIN Elmer (F, Olimpia)
14 ALVAREZ Edgar (M, Platense)
15 PALACIOS Milton (D, Libre)
16 FORTIN Oscar (D, Motagua)
17 OLIVA Carlos (M, Real Espana)
18 SILIEZAR Luis (G, Platense)

JAPAN
1 ENOMOTO Tatsuya (G, Yokohama F Marinos)
2 TESHIMA Kazuki (D, Kyoto Purple Sanga)
3 TSUJIMOTO Shigeki (D, Kyoto Purple Sanga)
4 ISHIKAWA Tatsuya (D, Tsukuba University)
5 KAJI Akira (D, Cerezo Osaka)
6 INAMOTO Junichi (M, Gamba Osaka)
7 SAKAI Tomoyuki (M, JEF Utd Ichihara)
8 OGASAWARA Mitsuo (M, Kashima Antlers)
9 TAKAHARA Naohiro (F, Jubilo Iwata)
10 MOTOYAMA Masashi (M, Kashima Antlers)
11 ENDO Yasuhito (M, Kyoto Purple Sanga)
12 NAKATA Koji (M, Kashima Antlers)
13 ONO Shinji (M, Urawa Reds)
14 NAGAI Yuichiro (F, Karlsruhe, Ger)
15 TAKADA Yasunori (F, Bellmare Hiratsuka)
16 BANDO Ryuji (F, Gamba Osaka)
17 UJIIE Hideyuki (D, Omiya Ardija)
18 MINAMI Yula (G, Kashiwa Reysol)

KAZAKHSTAN
1 LORIYA David (G, Astana-Astana)
2 PROSKURIN Denis (D, Elimaj-Semej)
3 SOLOSHENKO Igor (D, Shahter-Karaganda)
4 KUCHMA Alexandr (D, Taraz-Taraz)
5 GORBANEV Sergey (M, Taraz-Taraz)
6 ALIYEV Ali (M, Kajrat-Almaty)
7 SAMCHENKO Maxim (M, Vostok-Ustkamenogorsk)
8 ISSAYEV Andrey (M, Kajrat-Almaty)
9 TRAVIN Andrey (M, Kajrat-Almaty)
10 AKKAZYNOV Alikhan (F, Kajrat-Almaty)
11 TARASSOV Yevgeniy (F, Kajrat-Almaty)
12 URAZAYEV Yerlan (F, Kajrat-Almaty)
13 KUMISBEKOV Aidar (D, Kajrat-Almaty)
14 KICHSHENKO Dmitriy (D, Ferro-Aktube)
15 DINAYEV Murat (M, Zhiger-Shimkent)
16 ARTEMOV Vitaliy (M, Kajrat-Almaty)
17 ZEMTSOV Konstantin (D, Kajrat-Almaty)
18 SOLOVARENKO Denis (G, Kajrat-Almaty)

MALI
1 KEITA Boubacar (G, Stade Malien)
2 COULIBALY Dramane (F, Marseille, Fra)
3 TRAORE Abdou (D, CSK)
4 COULIBALY Adama (D, Djoliba)
5 CISSE Sadio Baba (M, Stade Malien)
6 TOUNKARA Bakou (M, Djoliba)
7 N DIAYE Tenema (F, Djoliba)
8 DIARRA Mahamadou (M, OFI Crete, Gre)
9 BAGAYOKO Mamadou (F, Sens)
10 KEITA Seydou (F, Marseille, Fra)
11 SISSOKO Sidi Makan (F, AS Sigui)
12 COULIBALY Amadou (D, Sion, Swi)
13 CAMARA Abdoulaye (D, Udinese, Ita)
14 DIARRA Mamadou (F, Stade Malien)
15 DISSA Mahamadou (F, CSK)
16 TRAORE Issiaka (G, Djoliba)
17 DIAKITE Sega (D, Stade Malien)
18 DAO Cheick (D, Stade Malien)

MEXICO
1 MARTINEZ Christian (G, Cuautitlan)
2 MENDEZ Mario (D, Atlas)
3 MASCORRO Oscar Yaroslav (D, Queretaro)
4 MARQUEZ Rafael (D, Atlas)
5 MORALES Carlos Adrian (M, Morelia)
6 TORRADO Gerardo (M, Pumas UNAM)
7 NAVA Jose Alejandro (F, Chivas Tijuana)
8 VICTORINO Cesareo (M, Pachuca)
9 MENDOZA Jose de Jesus (F, Leon)
10 RODRIGUEZ Juan Pablo (M, Atlas)
11 OSORNO Daniel (F, Atlas)
12 IBARRA Juan De Dios (G, Saltillo)
13 GONZALEZ Luis Igancio (M, Pumas UNAM)
14 RODRIGUEZ Eduardo (F, Correcaminos)
15 MARTINEZ Jonathan (M, America)
16 PACHECO Rodolfo (D, Pumas UNAM)
17 GONZALEZ Margarito (D, Tapatio)
18 REYNOSO Hector (D, Guadalajara)

NIGERIA
1 OKOYE Sam (G, Rangers)
2 OKUNOWO Gbenga (M, Barcelona, Spa)
3 ENEH Ikenna (D, Rangers)
4 OKPALA Obinna (D, Celtic, Sco)
5 ARANKA John (D, Cement)
6 IKEMEFUNA Ozuah (D, Jasper)
7 BABANGIDA Haruna (F, Barcelona, Spa)
8 GARBA Hashimu (F, Verona, Ita)
9 MELKAM Gabriel (M, Wattenscheid 09, Ger)
10 MUSA Abubakar (M, Cement)
11 SHITTU Ganiyu (M, Fortuna Dusseldorf, Ger)
12 ORUMA Dominic (G, Sharks)
13 IKEDIA Pius (M, ASEC Mimosas, IvC)
14 YOBO Joseph (F, Standard Liege, Blg)
15 AFOLABI Rabiu (D, Standard Liege, Blg)
16 ILOANUSI Chikelue (D, Fenerbahce, Tur)
17 AGHAHOWA Julius (M, Insurance)
18 DOMBRAYE Eddy (F, LKS Lodz, Pol)

PARAGUAY
1 FLORENTIN Christian (G, Cerro Cora)
2 MARTINEZ Emilio (D, Nacional)
3 BLANCO Roberto (D, Sportivo Luqueno)
4 DA SILVA Paulo (D, Perugia, Ita)
5 MALDONADO Ruben (D, Olimpia)
6 GIMENEZ Ever (M, Sportivo San Lorenzo)
7 FERNANDEZ Sergio (F, Cerro Cora)
8 CANDIA Isidro (M, Sportivo Luqueno)
9 SANTA CRUZ Roque (F, Olimpia)
10 ESCOBAR Francisco (M, Sportivo Luqueno)
11 CUEVAS Nelson (D, River Plate, Arg)
12 BAGNOLI Roberto (G, Sportivo Iteno)
13 VERA Nelson (F, Nacional)
14 MARECOS Elvis (D, Sportivo Iteno)
15 CABANAS Salvador (M, 12 de Octubre)
16 BRITEZ Jorge (M, 12 de Octubre)
17 FRETES Walter (D, Olimpia)
18 DOMINGUEZ Miguel (F, Atletico Tembetary)

PORTUGAL
1 SERGIO LEITE (G, Boavista)
2 FILIPE ANUNCIACAO (D, Feirense)
3 CANEIRA (D, Beira Mar)
4 CORREIA (D, Maia)
5 FREDY (D, Felgueiras)
6 HUGO LEAL (M, Benfica)
7 ESTEVES (D, Oriental Lx)
8 RICARDO SOUSA (M, Beira Mar)
9 PAULO COSTA (F, Lourinhanense)
10 SIMAO SABROSA (F, Sporting Lisbon)
11 ALHANDRA (M, Lourinhanense)
12 MARCIO SANTOS (G, Lourinhanense)
13 FILIPE CANDIDO (F, Salgueiros)
14 LUIS FILIPE (F, Academica)
15 MARCO CLAUDIO (M, Uniao Sport)
16 NECA (M, Belenenses)
17 DANI (F, Southampton, Eng)
18 CARREIRA (D, Real Deportivo)

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND
1 O'REILLY Alex (G, West Ham Utd, Eng)
2 HEARY Thomas (D, Huddersfield, Eng)
3 DOYLE Keith (D, St Patrick's Athletic)
4 GAVIN Jason (D, Middlesbrough, Eng)
5 DOHERTY Gary (D, Luton Town, Eng)
6 QUINN Barry (M, Coventry City, Eng)
7 McPHAIL Stephen (M, Leeds Utd, Eng)
8 CROSSLEY Garry (M, Celtic, Sco)
9 GEORGE Liam (F, Luton Town, Eng)
10 KEANE Robbie (F, Wolverhampton Wanderers, Eng)
11 DUFF Damien (F, Blackburn Rovers, Eng)
12 BAKER Richie (F, Shelbourne)
13 HEALY Colin (M, Celtic, Sco)
14 SADLIER Richie (F, Milwall, Eng)
15 CASEY Ryan (F, Swansea City, Wal)
16 DELANEY Dean (G, Everton, Eng)
17 DONNOLLY Paul (D, Leeds Utd, Eng)
18 FERGUSON Barry (D, Coventry City, Eng)

SAUDI ARABIA
1 ZAID Mabrouk (G, Al Riyadh)
2 AL SHEHRI Fouzi (D, Al Qadisiyah)
3 ALBAHRI Ahmed (D, Al Ettifaq)
4 AL MUTAIRI Bandr (D, Al Hilal)
5 OMAR Tariq (D, Al Ittihad)
6 AL SUBAIE Fahad (M, Al Shabab)
7 AL SAQRI Saleh (M, Al Tae)
8 AL SHEHRI Saad (M, Al Ettifaq)
9 DABO Mohamad (F, Al Ahli)
10 AL HAGBANI Bader (M, Al Nasr)
11 AL ABDULAZIZ Talal (F, Al Nasr)
12 AL SHAYEI Turki (M, Al Hilal)
13 AL GARNI Omar (D, Al Ittihad)
14 AL SHAHRANI Mansour (M, Al Hilal)
15 AL ZAHRANI Fahad (F, Al Ahli)
16 AL OBAILI Faisal (D, Al Shabab)
17 AL ABEAH Abdulrahman (F, Al Ettifaq)
18 AL MAS Bandar (G, Al Hilal)

SOUTH KOREA
1 KIM Yong-dae (G, Yonsei University)
2 AN Hong-chan (D, Sungkyunkwan University)
3 LEE Bum-jig (D, Taegu University)
4 SHIN Dong-keun (D, Chunggu High School)
5 PARK Dong-hyuk (D, Korea University)
6 SONG Chong-gug (D, Yonsei University)
7 SEO Ki-bok (M, Yonsei University)
8 CHUN Jae-ho (D, Hongik University)
9 NAH Hee-geun (F, A-Joo University)
10 KIM Eun-jung (F, Taejon Citizen)
11 SEOL Ki-hyeon (F, Kwangwoon University)
12 HAN Dong-jin (G, Sangji University)
13 KIM Kun-hyung (M, Kyunghee University)
14 KIM Kyung-il (M, Chunnam Dragons)
15 SEO Kwan-soo (F, Dankook University)
16 KO Bong-hyun (F, Hongik University)
17 WOO Jin-seok (F, Yonsei University)
18 LEE Dong-gook (F, Pohang Steelers)

SPAIN
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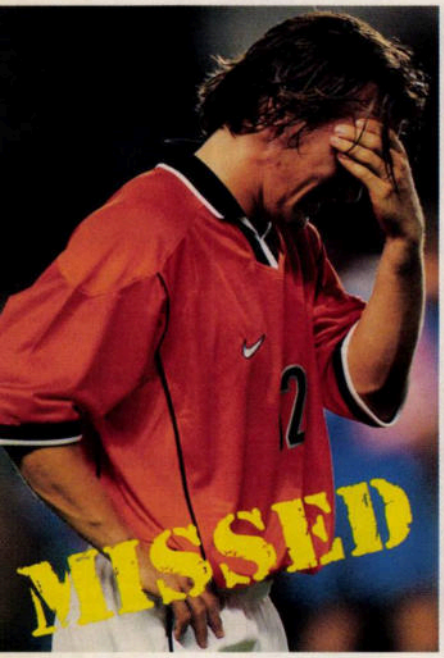

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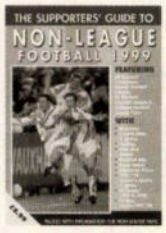

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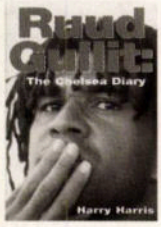

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Winning is everything

There's far too much at stake for sentiment, says Keir Radnedge

THE SENTIMENTAL euphoria that will envelop the last Champions League Final of the century represents the greatest danger to Manchester United's prospects of victory over Bayern Munich – and, more important for the game as a whole, the prospects of a duel to live in the memory.

Munich is a name which will always hold a unique place in the hearts of United players, officials and followers. Even those people who have no interest in football know and understand the emotional power that accrued to United following the deaths of eight superb young footballers at Riem airport back in February 1958.

Thus the meeting of the two richest and most powerful clubs of their respective countries, representatives of two cities linked in a very special, if painful, manner is all the more poignant. "It will be like meeting old friends," said Bayern coach Ottmar Hitzfeld, when he knew United, too, had reached the Final. Hitzfeld was referring to the fact that the teams drew 1-1 and 2-2 in the group stage last autumn.

But this is more than a meeting of old friends. The Final in Barcelona's majestic Camp Nou, a fitting venue for such a match, takes place on the 90th anniversary of the birth of the late Sir Matt Busby, who not only laid the foundations of United's success but enjoyed plenty of it himself – most notably in the 1968 Champions Cup Final triumph over Benfica at Wembley.

That was the holy grail for Sir Matt; he felt he owed it to the victims of Munich. Now, his footballing heir, Alex Ferguson, is within reach of reawakening the dream for a new United generation – and a very different generation to the workaday young men of both 1958 and 1968.

Football has changed beyond all recognition – off the pitch. But on the pitch the winning attributes remain the same: talent, skill, application, discipline, effort, self-sacrifice…and a twist of luck.

Sir Bobby Charlton, two-goal hero for United at Wembley in 1968 and now an Old Trafford director, knows all about the importance of fate. He was a member of the England team who, in 1966, benefited from a linesman's controversial verdict on the way to World Cup-winning glory. On the other side that day, just as he will be in Barcelona, was Franz Beckenbauer.

Nowadays Beckenbauer is more than a director, he is Bayern's president. He and Charlton thus re-engage in a highly competitive duel which has never stretched their friendship and respect. Camp Nou is not their only battleground: the two are figureheads for their countries' respective pursuit of host rights to the 2006 World Cup. Victory for one or the other's team in Barcelona will not alter the World Cup reality one iota but it will be seen to represent a hostage to fortune.

Both clubs, as I write, are in search of a fabulous treble of League championship, domestic Cup and Champions League. Bayern have the easier run-in as far as domestic competition is concerned, which is a clear advantage; who knows what injuries or suspension complications United may collect in the all-out pursuit of what would be a record third domestic Double in the 1990s?

In one sense, Bayern are pupils, having decided, four years ago, to follow Manchester United's lead in terms of commercial organisation. Now they intend to prove at Camp Nou that they have learned all their lessons, both on and off the pitch, only too well.

In terms of achievements, Bayern have an edge. They have won the German League a record 14 times, United the English championship 11 times; Bayern have won the German Cup on a record nine occasions, United the FA Cup also nine times. But Bayern have been World Club champions, United only runners-up. Bayern have won the Champions Cup three times, United only once. Bayern have also won all three European trophies – which is also more than United can say.

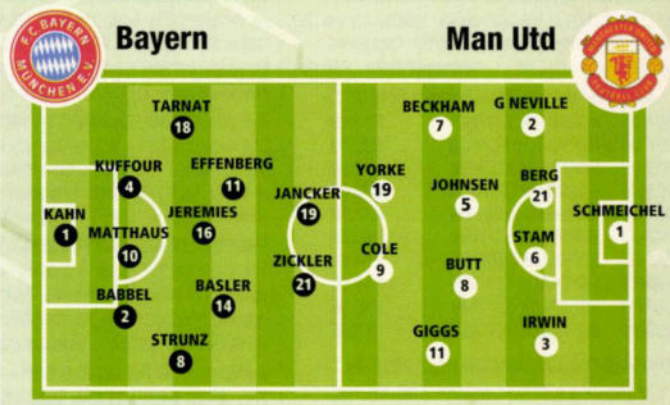
Expect hype about the talents of David Beckham, Ryan Giggs, Dwight Yorke and Co in the run-up to Barcelona. But balance all the hot air against the reality and pragmatism – perhaps the more clear-headed common sense – that Bayern will bring to the Final.

Listen to Bayern goalkeeper Oliver Kahn, who warned that Munich will not be deflected from their European destiny by all the claptrap surrounding Manchester United's return to the Final. Kahn, whose superb goalkeeping defied Kyiv Dynamo in Munich in the semi-final return in the Olympic stadium, says: "Merely playing in the Final is not what I want. I suppose many players would be happy to say they had done that. It would be the climax of their careers.

"But I do not collect occasions. What's the point? I am a professional footballer and I am only satisfied by being a successful one. I am interested just in winning. It doesn't matter who against – Kyiv, Kaiserslautern, Manchester United. All I am interested in is winning the Cup."

Bayern coach Hitzfeld has no illusions, either. He says: "We know United's strengths but we have nothing to be afraid of. In both group matches we

The tactical battle



FOR BAYERN, Giovane Elber is definitely ruled out with a knee injury; left wing-back Bixente Lizarazu is probably out, but he faces a late, late fitness test. If he doesn't make it, Michael Tarnat will replace him. Coach Hitzfeld will stick to a 3-5-2, with Babbel and Kuffour the likely stoppers alongside libero Matthaus. Linke and Helmer are likely to provide defensive cover on the bench. Whenever possible, veteran defender Matthaus will augment the midfield trio of Jeremies, Effenberg and, probably, Basler. Fink is a utility midfielder who can cover if Jeremies is injured. Strunz is the first-choice right wing-back, but Babbel or even Zickler are alternatives in that position. Zickler is a likely partner for Jancker up front, though the height of that partnership could be seen to play to United's strengths in defence; Salihamidzic or Scholl could be used as trickier alternatives. Hitzfeld also has the option of using the Iranian Ali Daei as a replacement for Jancker.

FOR UNITED, the loss of Scholes and Keane restricts the options in midfield for coach Ferguson. Butt will play a crucial role, while Johnsen could move up from defence. Phil Neville, who normally provides cover for Irwin at left-back, can also be used in a midfield role. Alternatively, Giggs and Beckham could play more centrally, with Blomqvist on the flank. If Johnsen moves up, Berg should partner Stam in the centre, though Gary Neville can fill the role, with Brown slotting in at right back. May is a further central defensive option. Up front, Cole and Yorke are the likely pairing, with Sheringham and Solskjaer on the bench.

Centre stage…Camp Nou in Barcelona

Action replay…Bayern v United, Group D

showed that we could stand comparison. On paper, Manchester have the better team, but we have other qualities."

Bayern's Achilles heel is the injury crisis that has depleted their squad. Their Brazilian top scorer, Giovane Elber, is out with knee ligament damage and while French World Cup-winning left-back Bixente Lizarazu is confident he will be fit for Barcelona, Bayern's medical staff have their doubts. Weakness in such key roles places ever more pressure on the veteran legs of sweeper Lothar Matthaus – nearing the end of his Munich career – and playmaker Stefan Effenberg.

In addition, team spirit has been disrupted by outspoken comments from the match-winner against Kyiv, Mario Basler, who has been frustrated at failing to gain a regular place in Bayern's starting line-up. Basler says: "If the club cannot find a regular place for me then it would be better for them to be honest about the future so we can part company. Never knowing whether I am in or out of the team destroys my confidence."

United will have their own problems. Suspended skipper Roy Keane's competitive aggression will be badly missed in midfield, as will the complementary option of Paul Scholes.

Ironically, UEFA decided – the day after United's wondrous semi-final revival against Juventus – that, from next season, a player can collect three yellow cards instead of two before he is suspended from a game. UEFA president Lennart Johansson rejected suggestions that all suspensions should be wiped out for finals so that clubs can play their strongest teams on the occasion.

In any case, such is the strength in depth of both United and Bayern that they can field high-quality teams to rise above the problems posed by injuries and suspensions.

Whether they can rise above the pressure of the occasion itself is another matter. If they can, then United possess what it takes to win; but if the game is dour and tight, if fear and nerves carry the day, then so will Bayern Munich.

Close shave…Carsten Jancker (left) and Jaap Stam compete for the ball during the group stage

Battle of the blo

OLIVER KAHN – Going up in value

DANKE, OLI. Wayward midfield genius Mario Basler fired Bayern into their first Champions Cup Final for 12 years with a spectacular goal against Kyiv Dynamo in the second leg of the semi-final. Yet in the euphoric Bavarian camp there was only one Man of the Match – keeper and captain Oliver Kahn.

"Kyiv dominated in the opening stages and we were hanging on," said Bayern coach Ottmar Hitzfeld. "We survived because we have a world-class goalkeeper. We have to thank Oliver Kahn. He was the main reason we won and reached the Final."

Inspirational playmaker Stefan Effenberg agreed: "It was a fantastic night for Oli. He was outstanding. It was a grandiose display from him."

Kyiv must still be wondering how the 29-year-old managed to prevent them from seizing the initiative during a concerted early assault on his goal. Without his fine reflex stops to deny Khatskevitch (twice) and Bialkevich, the *Munchner* would have been out of the contest after 20 minutes. It was no mean achievement for a keeper playing in some discomfort with a broken toe and who was forced to wear a boot two sizes too big.

"We gave Kyiv too much respect at the beginning of the game and let them dictate," said Kahn. "We shouldn't have been surprised that they started so strongly. As for my saves, that's what I'm there for. I'm the goalkeeper and have to deal with dangerous situations, and Kyiv kept me busy.

"After we scored, I knew we would do it. Our defence was stronger in the second half and we kept our concentration well. That was so important. Kyiv are the type of team who can create two goals in two minutes.

"I don't see a favourite for the Final. We played Man United twice in the group stage and both ended in draws. That proves what a tough group it was. They and ourselves are the two dominant sides in Europe. It's logical we are the Champions League finalists."

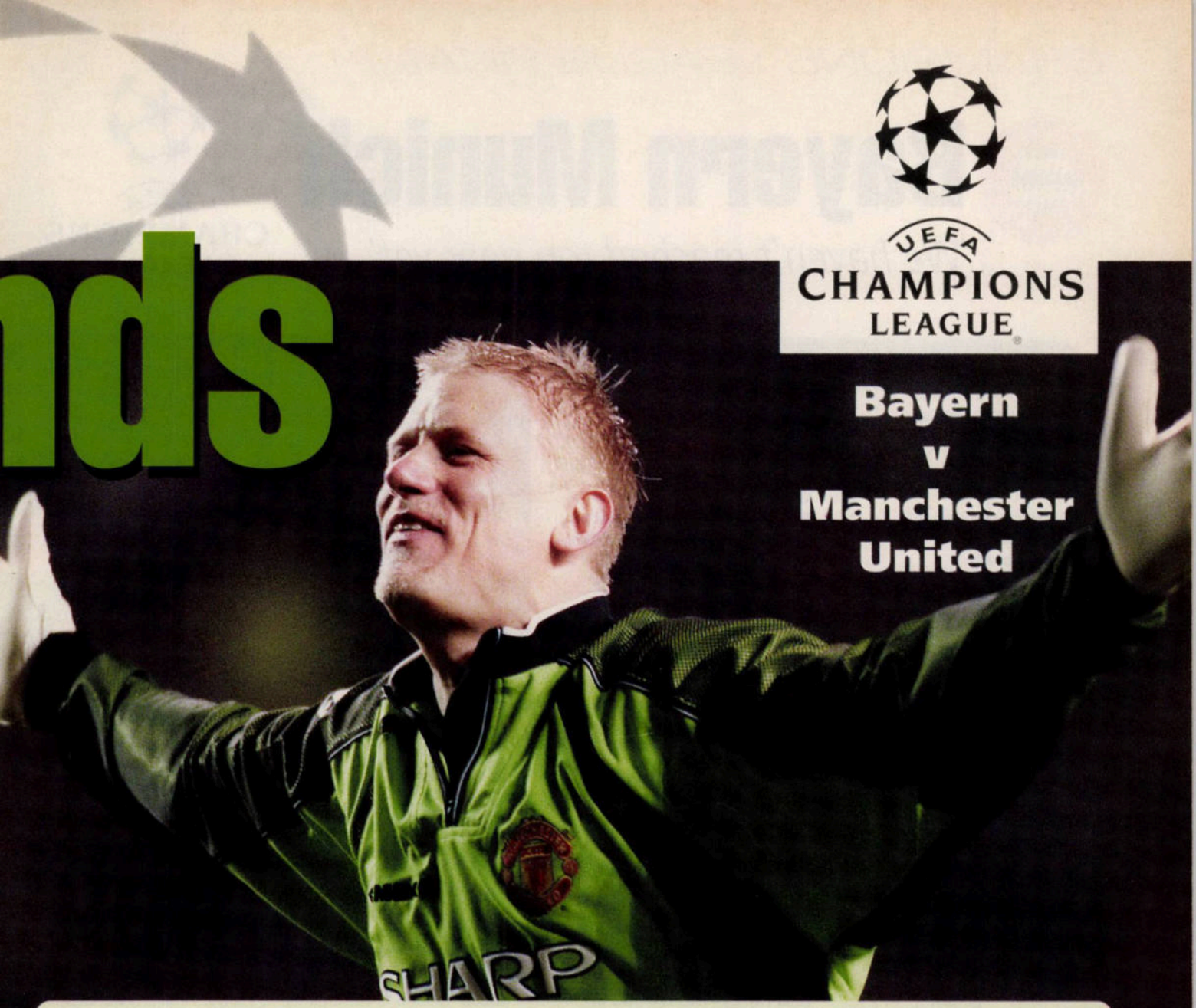
The 1998-99 campaign has proved a landmark season for Kahn. After three years as his country's number two keeper, he is now firmly established as first choice, he has been the bedrock of Bayern's bid for a unique treble of Champions League, Bundesliga and domestic Cup, and in March he set a German League record of 737 minutes without conceding a goal.

"Such records are of limited importance to me," he says. "I'm a winner and prefer trophies. In the past three years, I've won the UEFA Cup, Bundesliga and German Cup with Bayern, and I'm still not satisfied. That's my character. I'm a perfectionist. I would like to win everything possible this season. We're in the Final of the Champions League and German Cup, and we have a big lead in the Bundesliga. The triple is on."

The volatile and uncompromising Kahn is never far from controversy. He certainly does not appreciate forwards whom he thinks are out to intimidate him – he had a head-to-head confrontation with Dortmund striker Heiko Herrlich last month – and is never slow with an outspoken comment. When Dortmund keeper Jens Lehmann pointed to the Bayern man's unconvincing performances for the national team against Turkey and Holland and claimed that he would make a better international keeper, Kahn's response was just what the media hoped for: "It's obvious who is number one. My displays warrant it. I'm in the best form of my career and am sure I'll be Germany's keeper until 2006. Let others send in their applications then."

Kahn is a former business studies and economics student, who loves to scour the financial sections of the newspaper. And his market value continues to rise.

Nick Bidwell



PETER SCHMEICHEL – Going out on a high

THE ENDURING image of Manchester United's first, last and so far only European Cup victory, at Wembley in 1968, is of captain Bobby Charlton, his shirt dripping with sweat, lifting the trophy.

United wore blue that night. Nothing to do with the merchandising men, of course. Their red shirts clashed with those of Benfica, who wore white on the night. Thirty-one years later, if United win their battle with the demons of history and triumph in Barcelona on May 26, the Cup will be collected by a man wearing not red, white, black, blue, grey or yellow, but green.

Goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel will captain United against Bayern in the absence of the inspirational, but suspended, Roy Keane. For the Dane, there could be no higher stage on which to end his United career.

Schmeichel insists that the Champions League Final will be his last game for United. "There's no going back," he says. "I've made my decision – and I'm sticking to it."

The keeper's announcement about his intention to quit English football came after a run of poor performances last autumn, but, ironically, his form since then has been outstanding. United manager Alex Ferguson has Schmeichel, more than any other player, to thank for steering his team to the Champions League Final. Two saves stand out. The first was at point-blank range from Inter's Ivan Zamorano at Old Trafford in the quarter-final first leg. The second was at the feet of Filippo Inzaghi early in the second half of the semi-final second leg against Juve in Turin. If Inzaghi had managed to complete his hat-trick, United's treble hopes could have been shattered.

Ferguson is quick to pay tribute to his keeper: "He's been incredible. I think he ranks with the Shiltons and Banks and all the great goalkeepers there have been. He's been a major player in the success achieved by Manchester United over the past eight years. He's without doubt the best goalkeeper I've been involved with in my playing and managerial career. We respect him so much, and that's why there won't be any discussion about a fee for him."

Which is good news for his agent, the Norwegian Rune Hauge, who is now back in business after the George Graham bung scandal.

A move back to Brondby, who sold Schmeichel to United for just £550,000 in August 1991, appeared the obvious option when the keeper announced his decision to leave Manchester. But he says he wants to experience life in another country before returning to Denmark. "I have my 12-year-old Kaspar to think about and it would be good for him to learn another language before we return home. The decision had been coming for a while. It's not as if I've just come in and I'm leaving. I'm 35, I've had eight good years in England, and I feel that I've done a good job."

Marseille and Udinese have been mentioned as possible destinations, and Espanyol, Barcelona's second club, have also declared an interest.

But before any move can take place, Schmeichel has a lot to think about. As well as the Premiership run-in, which could see the keeper become a League champion for the fifth time, there are two Cup Finals that offer him the chance to leave United in a blaze of glory. If the team beat Newcastle at Wembley on May 22, the Dane will receive a third FA Cup winners' medal, joining Dick Pym of Bolton and Liverpool's Bruce Grobbelaar, the only two other keepers to have done so this century.

And then, four days later, there is Barcelona.

"I have had a fantastic career with United," says Schmeichel. "I owe it to the club, players and fans to do everything I can to finish on a successful note."

John Holmesdale

Bayern Munich

'We haven't reached top gear yet'

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

How they reached the Final

2ND QUALIFYING ROUND
Bayern 4 (Effenberg 59, Elber 63, Zickler 65, Fink 76)
Obilic Belgrade 0

Obilic Belgrade 1 (Sarac 67)
Bayern 1 (Matthaus 89)
Bayern 5-1 on agg

GROUP D
Brondby 2 (Hansen 88, Ravn 90)
Bayern 1 (Babbel 75)

Bayern 2 (Elber 11, 90)
Manchester Utd 2 (Yorke 30, Scholes 49)

Bayern 1 (Effenberg 44)
Barcelona 0

Barcelona 1 (Giovanni pen 29)
Bayern 2 (Zickler 48, Salihamidzic 87)

Bayern 2 (Jancker 51, Basler 57)
Brondby 0

Manchester Utd 1 (Keane 43)
Bayern 1 (Salihamidzic 56)

FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bayern Munich	6	3	2	1	9	6	11
Man Utd	6	2	4	0	20	11	10
Barcelona	6	2	2	2	11	9	8
Brondby	6	1	0	5	4	18	3

QUARTER-FINALS – 1ST LEG
Bayern 2 (Elber 31, Effenberg 35)
Kaiserslautern 0

QUARTER-FINALS – 2ND LEG
Kaiserslautern 0
Bayern 4 (Effenberg pen 9, Jancker 22, 39, Basler 56)
Bayern 6-0 on agg

SEMI-FINALS – 1ST LEG (APR 7)
Kyiv Dynamo 3 (Shevchenko 16, 43, Kossovskyi 50)
Bayern 3 (Tarnat 45, Effenberg 78, Jancker 90)
Kyiv: Shovkovskyi – Luzhnyi, Vaschuk, Holovko, Kaladze, Khatskevitch (Kiriukhin 81), Husin, Bialkevich, Kossovskyi, Rebrov, Shevchenko.
Bayern: Kahn – Matthaus, Kuffour, Babbel, Strunz, Jeremies, Effenberg, Tarnat, Salihamidzic, Jancker (Daei 90), Scholl (Zickler 72).
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 80,000. **Ref:** Milton Nielsen (Den)

● Dynamo threw away a two-goal lead as Bayern's fighting spirit earned them a draw and a cache of away goals to take back to Germany. Shevchenko opened the scoring, picking up on a Bialkevich through-ball and slotting home past Kahn. Just before half-time, the Milan-bound striker made it two, his free-kick deflected in by team-mate Kaladze. However, Tarnat reduced the deficit almost immediately, his low free-kick beating Shovkovskyi from 35 yards.

After the break a mis-hit clearance by Bayern's Kuffour allowed Kossovskyi to volley home from inside the box and restore Kyiv's two-goal lead. But with just 12 minutes left, Effenberg's strike from a free-kick gave Bayern hope, and in the final seconds Jancker fought off the attentions of Kyiv's defence before firing home to level the scores.

SEMI-FINALS – 2ND LEG (APR 21)
Bayern 1 (Basler 36)
Kyiv Dynamo 0
Bayern: Kahn – Matthaus, Linke, Kuffour, Babbel, Jeremies, Effenberg, Tarnat (Fink 84), Basler, Jancker (Daei 75), Zickler (Salihamidzic 75).
Kyiv: Shovkovskyi – Luzhnyi, Vaschuk, Holovko, Kaladze, Khatskevitch, Husin (Kardash 82), Bialkevich, Kossovskyi, Rebrov, Shevchenko.
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 59,000. **Ref:** M Pereira (Por)
Bayern 4-3 on agg

● Kyiv disappointed their many fans by putting on a poor display, particularly when finishing – and were lucky to escape a bigger margin of defeat. Shevchenko and Rebrov began well but faded through lack of support, and Bayern became increasingly dominant. Basler scored the only goal with a splendid angled shot from 20 yards. That was after Kahn had denied Dynamo at least two goals with fine saves, and he made an even better one from Shevchenko near the end.

Spectacular stuff...Jancker fires an overhead shot at the Kyiv goal in Munich

WHAT THEY SAY

Ottmar Hitzfeld

"Of course, it is very satisfying that Bayern have had such a positive season on all fronts. But now we have to come up with the end product. Without splitting hairs, I think the team has yet to reach its full potential. I'm looking for us to be slicker in our passing and to put opposition defences under more consistent pressure. I can only pay tribute to the great professionalism and winning mentality of the squad. Getting to the Champions League Final is a wonderful achievement, but we must not stop there. We will have to be at maximum efficiency in Barcelona. Manchester United are a side I rate very highly."

Lothar Matthaus

"I remember how low I felt when Bayern lost the Champions Cup Final in 1987 to FC Porto. We were hot favourites and were taken by surprise. Even though Manchester United are unquestionably a top team, I'm looking forward to a different result at the Nou Camp. It should be an evenly-matched contest, a 50-50 game."

Mario Basler

"I've been attacked a lot recently for this and that and all the criticism has got to me. So it was really good for my self-confidence to score against Kyiv and a memorable goal at that. I'm not an uncomplicated player. I don't like to run a lot. But I know I've good ability."

Markus Babbel

"To get to the Champions League Final without two of our best players, Giovane Elber and Bixente Lizarazu, shows what a fabulous squad we have."

Pointing the way...coach Hitzfeld

COACH

Ottmar HITZFELD
12.1.49. Spent his playing days with mixed success in Germany and Switzerland, where his clubs included Stuttgart, Lugano and Lucerne. Went on to coach Swiss sides SC Zug, FC Aarau and Grasshopper, leading the latter to back-to-back championships in 1990 and 1991. In July 1991 he joined Borussia Dortmund, and in 1995 and 1996 repeated the feat of winning consecutive League titles. The next year he led Dortmund to the Champions League Final, when they defeated Juventus 3-1. That summer he took on an executive position at the club, and became manager of Bayern at the start of this season.

GOALKEEPER

1 Oliver KAHN
15.6.69. Club captain and survivor from the last Bayern side to taste European glory – in the 1996 UEFA Cup. Ever-present in the Champions League this season, as in the past two years. See profile, page 22.

12 Sven SHEUER
19.1.71. Veteran reserve (at Bayern since 1988), but lacks big-match experience.

22 Bernd DREHER
2.11.66. Reserve signed from KFC Uerdingen in 1996. Previously with Bayer Leverkusen.

DEFENDERS

2 Markus BABBEL
8.9.72. Like Kahn, a survivor from 1996 and an ever-present in Europe this season and last. The first-choice centre-back, who can switch to right-back if need be. German international. Loaned to Hamburg 1992-94. Loyal Bavarian, famous for saying, when offered a move abroad: "I don't want to go to a foreign club – I was playing for one in Hamburg."

5 Thomas HELMER
21.4.65. Veteran central defender who has been restricted through injury to one group game this season and has not featured in the knockout stages. A likely sub in the Final.

4 Sammy KUFFOUR
3.9.76. Ghanaian international central defender who is now a regular first-team player in Europe. A relative veteran despite being just 22, since he played as an 18-year-old in the 94-95 semi-final defeat by Ajax. Likely first-choice stopper despite mistakes in the semi-final first leg against Kyiv.

25 Thomas LINKE
26.12.69. First season at Bayern but already has European silverware to his name having been a member of Schalke's UEFA Cup-winning team in 1997. Has made sporadic appearances in the Champions League this season, providing cover in central defence. A surprise choice against Kyiv in the semi-final second leg.

10 Lothar MATTHAUS
21.3.61. Indefatigable sweeper who has two UEFA Cup winners' medals (Inter 1991 and Bayern 1996) but who has yet to secure Europe's top club prize. Surely not many opportunities left but he is most definitely a survivor. Holds the world record for outfield international caps – now 131.

8 Thomas STRUNZ
25.4.68. Experienced right wing-back and veteran of Euro 96. Another 1996 UEFA Cup winner. Made his name at Stuttgart and joined Bayern for £1million in 1995.

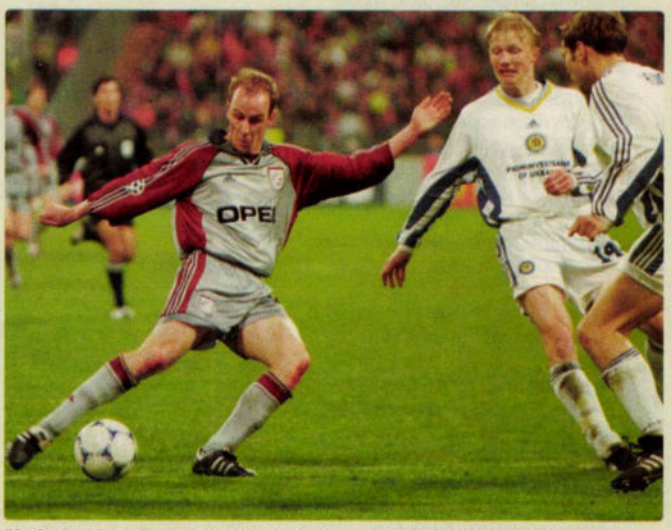
MIDFIELDERS

14 Mario BASLER
18.12.68. Central midfielder and experienced German international who scored a spectacular winning goal against Kyiv in the semi-final. By no means a certain starter – off the pitch, he has been making waves in Bayern's ongoing clash of personalities and at one point the club even hired a private detective to keep an eye on his nocturnal activities.

11 Stefan EFFENBERG
2.8.68. Bayern's key man in the competition so far, he has missed only one game on the route to the Final. He is the player who drives the team forward and he can find the net, too – his four goals in the competition proper included one in both quarter-final ties against German rivals Kaiserslautern. Has been in exemplary form on and off the pitch.

17 Thorsten FINK
29.10.67. Mainly been used as midfield cover this season, but has played a couple of full games. Was an ever-present in last season's Champions League.

16 Jens JEREMIES
5.3.74. In his first season at Bayern having joined from Munich 1860 last summer. Born in Gorlitz, near the German border with Poland. Nicknamed *Gardinen* (curtain) because of his shoulder-length hair. At France 98 he was one of the few German players to gain credit. "Our discovery of the World Cup," said Franz Beckenbauer. "Maybe we would have gone further if all our players had shown Jerry's attitude."



Mario dazzler...Basler scored a wonder goal against Kyiv in the semi-final

7 Mehmet SCHOLL
16.10.70. Now back in contention after a year out with a serious knee injury. He reached the Champions League semis with Bayern in 94-95, played in every game last season and won the UEFA Cup with the club in 1996. Euro 96 winner. Lacks match fitness and unlikely to start in Barcelona.

18 Michael TARNAT
27.10.69. Has started in midfield in several games during the campaign but will play at left wing-back in place of the injured Lizarazu. Played the full 90 minutes in all of Bayern's Champions League games last season. German international who Bayern signed from Karlsruhe in 1997.

FORWARDS

24 Ali DAEI
21.3.69. Iranian international who joined Bayern from relegated Arminia Bielefeld last summer. Has appeared four times in the Champions League proper this season, all as sub. Came on in both semi-final legs – and could do so again in Barcelona.

19 Carsten JANCKER
28.8.74. Towering, powerful centre-forward who has started scoring in European games at just the right time following the injury to Giovane Elber. After getting only one goal in the group stage – against Brondby at home – Jancker converted twice away to Kaiserslautern in the quarter-finals and scored the vital last-minute equaliser in Kyiv in the semis. Clumsy, but effective, and likely first-choice in Barcelona.

20 Hasan SALIHAMIDZIC
1.1.77. Possible surprise package. Bosnian international who played a couple of full games up front during the group stage and also filled in in a variety of midfield roles. Scored two vital goals on the way – the late winner in Barcelona and the second-half equaliser which earned Bayern the point in Manchester that saw them finish top of the group.

21 Alexander ZICKLER
28.2.74. A sub in Bayern's 1996 UEFA Cup Final triumph, he still essentially provides cover for the front men. Only one goal to his name in the competition so far – the first away to Barcelona in the group stage. Has a new contract and recently made his international team debut as a right-sided midfielder.

UNAVAILABLE FOR THE FINAL:
Giovane ELBER, striker (injured)
Bixente LIZARAZU, wing-back (injured)

Manchester United

'We need 90 minutes like the first half in Turin'

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

How they reached the Final

2ND QUALIFYING ROUND
Manchester Utd 2 (Giggs 16, Cole 81)
LKS Lodz 0

LKS Lodz 0
Manchester Utd 0
Man Utd 2-0 on agg

GROUP D
Manchester Utd 3 (Giggs 17, Scholes 25, Beckham 64)
Barcelona 3 (Anderson 47, Giovanni pen 60, Luis Enrique pen 71)

Bayern Munich 2 (Elber 11, 90)
Manchester Utd 2 (Yorke 30, Scholes 49)

Brondby 2 (Daugaard 34, Sand 90)
Manchester Utd 6 (Giggs 2, 21, Cole 27, Keane 54, Yorke 59, Solskjaer 61)

Manchester Utd 5 (Beckham 7, Cole 13, P Neville 16, Yorke 28, Scholes 62)
Brondby 0

Barcelona 3 (Anderson 1, Rivaldo 56, 72)
Manchester Utd 3 (Yorke 25, 67, Cole 52)

Manchester Utd 1 (Keane 43)
Bayern Munich 1 (Salihamidzic 56)

FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bayern Munich	6	3	2	1	9	6	11
Man Utd	6	2	4	0	20	11	10
Barcelona	6	2	2	2	11	9	8
Brondby	6	1	0	5	4	18	3

QUARTER-FINALS
Manchester Utd 2 (Yorke 7, 45)
Internazionale 0

Internazionale 1 (Ventola 63)
Manchester Utd 1 (Scholes 88)
Man Utd 3-1 on agg

SEMI-FINALS
Manchester Utd 1 (Giggs 90)
Juventus 1 (Conte 25)
Man Utd: Schmeichel – G Neville, Berg (Johnsen 46), Stam, Irwin, Beckham, Keane, Scholes, Giggs, Cole, Yorke (Sheringham 78).
Juventus: Peruzzi – Mirkovic, Montero (Ferrara 67), Iuliano, Pessotto, Conte, Deschamps, Davids, Di Livio (Tacchinardi 76), Zidane, Inzaghi (Esnaider 87).
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 54,487. **Ref:** Diaz Vega (Spa).
● Juve made their clear first-half superiority count after 25 minutes, when Conte picked up a threaded ball from Davids on the edge of the penalty box and slid his shot past Schmeichel into the corner of the net. Just before half-time, Zidane, playing with a heavily strapped thigh, set up Inzaghi for another chance, but his shot went the wrong side of the post. United created few chances in the first period, their best effort coming when Beckham put a free-kick marginally wide. After the break, however, they began to look much more threatening. Johnsen headed a Beckham free-kick over the bar, a Giggs header was punched away by Peruzzi just before the hour and then Scholes shot wide.

The home side managed to put on even more pressure as time began to run out, but with just five minutes remaining, substitute Sheringham's headed goal from a Keane shot was ruled out for offside. Then as the game neared stoppage time, Beckham's ball from the right fell loose in the box and Giggs was on hand to hammer it into the roof of the net.

Juventus 2 (Inzaghi 6,10)
Manchester Utd 3 (Keane 24, Yorke 34, Cole 84)
Juventus: Peruzzi – Birindelli (Amoruso 46), Ferrara, Iuliano (Montero 46), Pessotto, Conte, Deschamps, Davids, Di Livio (Fonseca 80), Zidane, Inzaghi.
Man Utd: Schmeichel – G Neville, Stam, Johnsen, Irwin, Beckham, Keane, Butt, Blomqvist (Scholes 68), Cole, Yorke.
HT: 2-2. **Att:** 60,806. **Ref:** Meier (Swi).
Man Utd 4-3 on agg
● United brought off one of the most remarkable recoveries of European history to reach their second Champions Cup Final. Inzaghi put Juve 2-0 up within 10 minutes, but Keane added further flame to the fire with a neat header from a corner to halve the deficit. Yorke levelled the scores with a header from a Cole pass.

In the second half, manager Ferguson's skills became more evident. He had preferred to use the more pragmatic Butt to Scholes in midfield, thus helping to nullify the threat of Conte and Zidane. And gradually the tide turned in United's favour. With six minutes left, Yorke broke through on goal, was brought down by Juve keeper Peruzzi as he tried to round him and Cole rolled in the loose ball.

Flying Irishman...Keane scores with a glancing header against Juventus

WHAT THEY SAY

Alex Ferguson
"Keane and Scholes will miss the Final because of suspension. At this moment, the only players I have who are certain to play in the FA Cup Final against Newcastle are Keane and Scholes. We've done well over the years but the difference between those teams and the present one is in their composure. My lads were absolutely brilliant in the first half of the win in Turin – we need 90 minutes like that in Barcelona."

Roy Keane
"United are bigger than any one player. It hurts to miss the game but the boys will win without me."

Andy Cole
"People had started writing off Dwight Yorke and me as strikers, saying the goals had dried up. But every striker goes through patches when he can't score. We've got through that patch – now for the Final."

Didier Deschamps
Juventus and France skipper: "Over the two legs United deserved their win in the semi-final, and they will be very, very hard for Bayern to master."

Sandy Busby
Son of the late Sir Matt: "United will win it now. Alex Ferguson has built teams in the traditions set by my father, who would have been proud of what the team have achieved."

THE SQUAD

Great success...Alex Ferguson

COACH

Alex FERGUSON
31.12.41. Won the Scottish League with Aberdeen in 1980, 1984 and 1985, as well as the Cup-winners Cup in 1983. Had a brief spell as caretaker manager of the Scottish national side – taking them to the 1986 World Cup – before joining Manchester United. Under his management, the club have won four League titles, three FA Cups, the Cup-winners Cup in 1991 and the European Super Cup the same year. Led Man Utd to the Champions League semis in 1997 and the quarter-finals last year.

GOALKEEPERS

1 Peter SCHMEICHEL
18.11.63. The Danish international and captain. See profile, page 23.

17 Raimond VAN DER GOUW
24.3.63. Dutch reserve who has had few first-team opportunities because of the form of Schmeichel.

DEFENDERS

21 Henning BERG
1.9.68. Norwegian central defender who gave one of his best performances for United in the quarter-final second leg away to Inter. Has fought his way back into the first-team in recent months, but troubled by injury recently. A likely reserve in Barcelona.

30 Wes BROWN
16.3.79. Young full-back who broke into the first-team in the early part of the season. Appeared in several group games but has had to settle for the bench latterly. Highly rated by Ferguson and Kevin Keegan, who recently called him up to the England squad for the friendly against Hungary.

5 Ronny JOHNSEN
10.6.69. Norwegian international who started off as one half of Ferguson's first-choice central defensive partnership, but injuries have disrupted his season. Provides a useful option as a defensive midfielder and is dangerous in the air at set-pieces.

3 Denis IRWIN
31.10.65. Republic of Ireland veteran who has held on to his left-back spot despite pressure from Phil Neville. Consistent performer and free-kick specialist. Only survivor of United's 1991 Cup-winners Cup-winning team.

2 Gary NEVILLE
18.2.75. Formed a central defensive pairing with Jaap Stam in the first half of the season, but has since been used in his more familiar right-back role. Only 24 but a veteran of European competition, having played as a 17-year-old against Torpedo Moscow in the 1992 UEFA Cup.

12 Phil NEVILLE
21.1.77. Younger brother of Gary. Provides cover for the left-back position, or can be used in midfield.

6 Jaap STAM
17.7.72. Arrived at United after an indifferent World Cup with Holland and with a hefty £10.5m price-tag, but has answered his critics by producing consistently effective performances in central defence.

MIDFIELDERS

7 David BECKHAM
2.5.75. United's main provider of crosses and the supply line, along with Giggs, that opposition managers are most concerned about. A master at converting free-kicks. Has received praise for the way he has dealt with the media glare following his World Cup sending-off against Argentina. A strong contender for Player of the Season.

15 Jesper BLOMQVIST
5.2.74. Replaced the injured Giggs on the left wing in the semi-final second leg against Juventus in Turin but has appeared in the first-team only intermittently. Arrived at United last summer from Parma, via an ill-fated stay at Milan. Made his name in IFK Gothenburg's run to the 1995 Champions League quarter-finals.

8 Nicky BUTT
21.5.75. Battling midfielder who has been used sparingly in the Champions League this season. When he has appeared it has tended to be as a 'shoring up' sub, to consolidate a position. However, provided excellent back-up to Keane in the semi-final second leg and will probably now start in Barcelona.

11 Ryan GIGGS
29.11.73. Three goals in the group stage and a vital late equaliser against Juventus in the semi-final first leg have made this Giggs' most prolific European season to date. His pace on the left offers one of United's most potent threats. Missed the semi-final second leg with an ankle injury.

FORWARDS

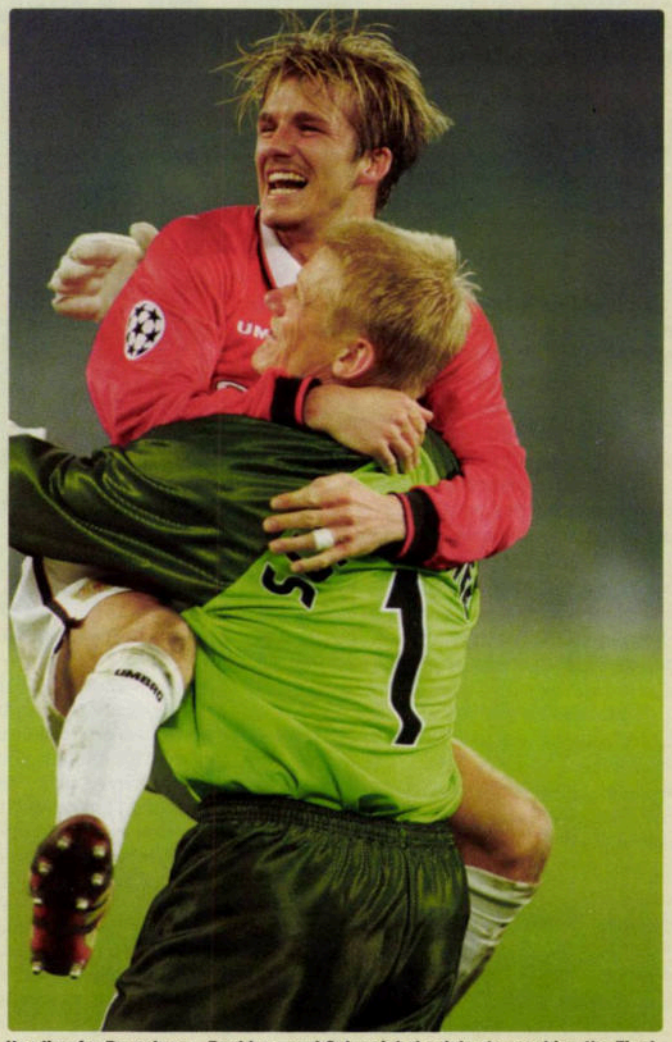
9 Andy COLE
15.10.71. Has struck up a formidable partnership with Dwight Yorke, and their combined total of eight goals helped to make United the top-scoring team of the group stage. This is undoubtedly Cole's most successful season at United and he has also broken into the England set-up. A striker who thrives on confidence, he has been criticised for needing too many touches in front of goal.

10 Teddy SHERINGHAM
2.4.66. Played in only one group game and was used only briefly in the semi-finals, but he offers experience and composure in attack. Out of favour this season, he has performed well when called upon, notably the semi-final first leg at Old Trafford and the FA Cup semi-final replay.

20 Ole Gunnar SOLSKJAER
26.3.73. Ousted from the first-team line-up by the success of the Cole-Yorke combination and has spent much of the Champions League campaign as a sub. In the Premiership, though, the Norwegian has made a habit of coming off the bench to score – including four in one game.

19 Dwight YORKE
3.11.71. Signed from Aston Villa for £12.6m just hours before the Champions League deadline and United have already had a big return – eight goals in the competition so far, including the two headers that put paid to Inter in the last eight. A prolific partnership with Cole in the Premiership.

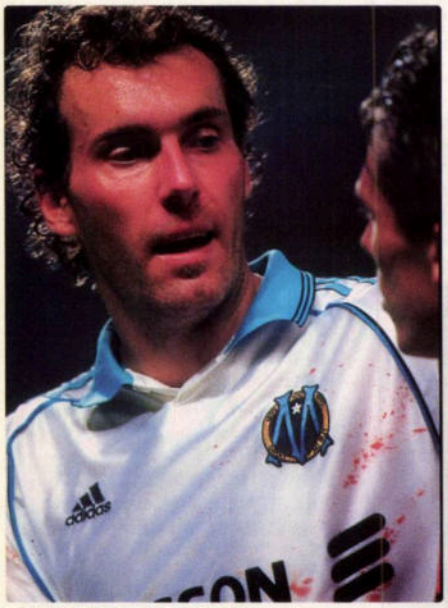
UNAVAILABLE FOR THE FINAL:
Roy KEANE, midfielder (suspended)
Paul SCHOLES, midfielder (suspended)



Heading for Barcelona...Beckham and Schmeichel celebrate reaching the Final

No worries, says Blanc

...even though Parma are potentially better



Cool under pressure...Laurent Blanc

WHETHER wearing the white of UEFA Cup finalists Olympique Marseille or the blue of France, veteran sweeper Laurent Blanc can be counted on to come into his own as the heat is turned up.

Blanc, a player who symbolises the triumph of composure over raw emotion, has made a speciality of excelling in pressure situations for France – he struck the Golden Goal that beat Paraguay in the second round of France 98 and the penalty shoot-out winner in the Euro 96 quarter-final victory against Holland – and he was again up to the mark when Marseille were awarded a potentially tie-breaking spot-kick late in their UEFA Cup semi-final match in Bologna.

No matter that German referee Markus Merk chalked off Blanc's first successful effort due to encroachment. The unperturbed OM skipper simply went through his routine once more and put the ball into the other corner. Not only had his equaliser steered Marseille to the UEFA Cup Final against Parma courtesy of the away goals rule, but the popular libero known as 'Lolo' had also gained a measure of revenge for his ill-fortune at France 98, when he was unjustly sent off in the semi-final with Croatia thanks to Slaven Bilic's theatricals, and suspended from the biggest date in French football history.

"I didn't deserve to be sent off against Croatia, but that's all ancient history now," shrugs Blanc. "Nobody can take away from me the fact that I played in the majority of the games which made us world champions. To my mind, there's no connection between France 98 and Marseille doing well in Europe."

Of his cool-headedness in the second leg against Bologna, he says: "It is annoying at the best of times when a referee orders a penalty to be retaken. But it is particularly so at such a delicate stage of an important game. It was a big test for me mentally, but fortunately my nerve held.

"This Marseille team has a lot of character. Many people thought we were on our way out of the UEFA Cup when we only beat Celta Vigo 2-1 in the first leg of the quarter-final and it was the same story after starting the semis with a goalless draw at home to Bologna. But in both ties we had the determination and morale to turn things around.

"At just 1-0 down to Bologna, we were far from dead and buried. We'd come to Italy with the objective of scoring and their early goal didn't change too much. We fought back, dominated territorially and finally got the goal and the result to take us to the Final."

After being at his commanding best at the heart of the defence against Bologna, 33-year-old Blanc can at last look forward to his first Euro Final – he missed Barcelona's Cup-winners Cup victory over PSG in 1997 because of injury. But with his trademark level-headedness, he stresses that the UEFA Cup cannot deflect OM from their domestic championship challenge. "We can't put our feet up and go through the motions before the UEFA Cup Final. We dearly want to be French champions and can't ease up if we are to stay ahead of Bordeaux. We have to keep the momentum going. Anyway, the best way to prepare for a game with a top side like Parma is by playing in tough League games at home and we'll definitely have those.

"Theoretically, Parma are a much stronger team than Bologna. In Veron, Chiesa, Crespo, Cannavaro, Thuram and Boghossian, Parma have many super players. But there's no reason for us to be too respectful or fearful of them. The days when French teams worried themselves to death with the thought of facing an Italian side are over."

Nick Bidwell

UEFA waits before acting on punch-up

Getting to grips...the Bologna-Marseille second leg ended in a mass brawl

FEW handshakes and shirts were exchanged at the end of the semi-final second leg between Bologna and Marseille. Out with the usual displays of sportsmanship, in with flailing fists and boots.

Hometown tempers had begun to fray following Laurent Blanc's penalty equaliser for Marseille four minutes from time, and Bologna midfielder Giancarlo Marocchi was rightly sent off for a wild challenge on Titi Camara. But seconds after the final whistle, the atmosphere turned even uglier, with a full-scale brawl breaking out in the tunnel area.

Kicks and punches were exchanged, Stephane Courbis, the son of the Marseille coach, became embroiled in the fracas and riot police were forced to intervene. The net result? Bruises galore, an injured photographer and the sort of publicity the game could do without.

The causes of the slug-fest depended on which side of the Alps you lived. The Italians claimed it had been triggered by obscene gestures made at Bologna supporters and players by Marseille's Peter Luccin; OM countered that the four black players in their team had suffered racist abuse from Bologna men and that they were only defending themselves after being attacked while leaving the pitch.

There was little sign of reconciliation at the post-match press conference. "Congratulations on the behaviour of your son," said Bologna captain Michele Paramatti to Marseille boss Rolland Courbis.

"Congratulations on your bad attitude," hit back Courbis. "You don't know how to lose."

The fight served as a prelude to clashes between rival supporters outside the ground and UEFA says it will await reports on the incidents before deciding on any action.

Nick Bidwell

WHAT THEY SAY

'We have a half-chance out of 10'

Rolland Courbis, Marseille coach

"Against Parma we have a half-chance out of 10 to win. It's difficult to compare us with Parma. We don't box in the same weight category. Financially, we can't compete with them. I would love to buy at least half of their team. But I don't think they would be interested in nearly as many of my team. We also have to contend with having Gallas, Luccin and Ravanelli banned from the Final; that's a key man missing from each line of the team. On the other hand, football isn't an exact science. Outsiders can win."

Daniel Bravo, Marseille midfielder

"As a former Parma player, I hope to give our coach all the information he needs on the Italians. I'm certain he will come up with a gameplan to make life difficult for our opponents in the Final. It's clear Parma have much more quality than Bologna. They are one of the best sides in Europe, and guys like Veron, Chiesa and Crespo can tear a defence apart. But Marseille are a great Cup team and in a one-off match, we fancy our chances."

Leading the underdogs...Rolland Courbis

How they reached the Final

MARSEILLE

1ST ROUND
Sigma Olomouc 2 (Heinz 35, 41)
Marseille 2 (Ravanelli 29, Roy 83)

Marseille 4 (Dugarry 19, 75, Pires 24, 86)
Sigma Olomouc 0
Marseille 6-2 on agg

2ND ROUND
Werder Bremen 1 (Herzog 69)
Marseille 1 (Maurice 67)

Marseille 3 (Maurice 36, Issa 52, Dugarry 77)
Werder Bremen 2 (Eilts 48, Herzog 82)
Marseille 4-3 on agg

3RD ROUND
Monaco 2 (Trezeguet pen 17, Giuly 56)
Marseille 2 (Pires 10, Camara 39)

Marseille 1 (Camara 71)
Monaco 0
Marseille 3-2 on agg

QUARTER-FINALS
Marseille 2 (Maurice 33, 68)
Celta Vigo 1 (Mostovoi 64)

Celta Vigo 0
Marseille 0
Marseille 2-1 on agg

SEMI-FINAL – 1ST LEG (April 6)
Marseille 0
Bologna 0
Att: 60,000. **Ref:** Wojcik (Pol)
Marseille: Porato – Gallas, Issa, Blanc, Domoraud – Luccin (Bravo 78), Brando, Pires – Dugarry (Da Silva 67), Maurice (Camara 78), Ravanelli.
Bologna: Antonioli – Bia, Mangone, Rinaldi, Paramatti – Marocchi, Ingesson, Fontolan (Nervo 67), Binotto (Cappioli 74) – Signori (Maini 80), K Andersson.

SEMI-FINAL – 2ND LEG (April 20)
Bologna 1 (Paramatti 18)
Marseille 1 (Blanc pen 86)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 39,000. **Ref:** Merk (Ger)
1-1 on agg. Marseille won on away goals
Bologna: Antonioli – Bia, Mangone, Rinaldi, Paramatti, Marocchi – Ingesson, Fontolan (Cappioli 76), Binotto (Nervo 76) – Signori, K Andersson.
Sent off: Marocchi 88mins.
Marseille: Porato – Gallas, Blanc, Da Silva, Domoraud – Luccin, Brando (Maurice 46), Bravo (Gourvennec 76), Pires – Dugarry (Camara 68), Ravanelli.

PARMA

1ST ROUND
Fenerbahce 1 (Moldovan 23)
Parma 0

Parma 3 (Akbas Saffet og 23, Crespo 45, Boghossian 73)
Fenerbahce 1 (Balic 59)
Parma 3-2 on agg

2ND ROUND
Wisla Krakow 1 (Kulawik 68)
Parma 1 (Chiesa 3)

Parma 2 (Fiore 20, Zajac og 46)
Wisla Krakow 1 (Zajac 90)
Parma 3-2 on agg

3RD ROUND
Rangers 1 (Wallace 68)
Parma 1 (Balbo 51)

Parma 3 (Balbo 47, Fiore 63, Chiesa pen 67)
Rangers 1 (Albertz 29)
Parma 4-2 on agg

QUARTER-FINALS
Bordeaux 2 (Micoud 40, Wiltord 44)
Parma 1 (Crespo 85)

Parma 6 (Crespo 37, 66, Chiesa 43, 59, Veron 48, Balbo pen 89)
Bordeaux 0
Parma 7-2 on agg

SEMI-FINAL – 1ST LEG (April 6)
Atletico Madrid 1 (Juninho pen 21)
Parma 3 (Chiesa 13, 40, Crespo 61)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 52,000. **Ref:** Levnikov (Rus)
Atletico: Molina – Serena, Chamot, Santi, Aguilera – Roberto (Tevenet 66), Jugovic, Valeron – Solari, Juninho, Jose Mari.
Parma: Buffon – Thuram, Sensini, Sartor – Vanoli, Fuser – Veron (Stanic 65), Fiore, D Baggio – Crespo (Mussi 82), Chiesa (Balbo 68).

SEMI-FINAL – 2ND LEG (April 20)
Parma 2 (Balbo 35, Chiesa 82)
Atletico Madrid 1 (Roberto 64)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 39,000. **Ref:** Durkin (Eng)
Parma 5-2 on agg
Parma: Buffon – Sartor (Mussi 41), Sensini, Thuram – Fuser, D Baggio (Boghossian 54), Fiore, Benarrivo – Veron – Chiesa, Balbo.
Atletico: Molina – Toni, Santi (Torrisi 67), Chamot, Geli (Aguilera 58), Valeron, Mena, Roberto, Juninho, Tevenet, Lardin (Serena 46).

Robert Pires, Marseille midfielder

"It should be to our advantage to be the underdogs in the Final. Although they were trounced in the return, Bordeaux proved in the first-leg of the quarter-final that Parma are not unbeatable."

Enrico Chiesa, Parma forward

"The UEFA Cup has been very kind to me this season. I've scored plenty of spectacular goals in the competition and, naturally, I'll be hoping for more of the same against Marseille. The problem for us at the moment is tiredness. Both physically and mentally, we are a little jaded."

Lilian Thuram, Parma and France defender

"I'm doubly happy to have reached the UEFA Cup Final. It's great that Parma are within one game of a major European trophy. But it's also good for French football that Marseille have qualified as well. They have a lot of good technical players, and with their fantastic support they relish a challenge.
I've not got split loyalties, though. Parma are my team and I will be doing all I can to make sure the UEFA Cup remains in Italy."

Alberto Malesani, Parma coach

"Lately, we have dropped far too many careless points in Serie A and have fallen behind in the championship race. But I'm confident of us making up for those disappointments with victory in the UEFA Cup. This competition is very important to us. There's always a strong field and only excellent teams go all the way. We have the players of experience and special ability to rise to the occasion."

No question of loyalty...Lilian Thuram

Cuper deserves the credit

Jeff King on the modest coach behind Mallorca's rise

AN OLD SAYING has it that an Argentinian is an Italian who thinks he's an Englishman. As for Mallorca coach Hector Cuper, he's suffering from his own personal strain of schizophrenia.

He's an Argentinian with English roots – his great-grandfather was called Cooper – who deploys his men like an Italian. Not that he'll suffer split loyalties when he travels to Birmingham for the Cup-winners Cup Final on May 19. Against the Romans of Lazio, he'll be flying the flag of Spain's upstarts from the Balearic Islands.

The 43-year-old Cuper, modest to a fault, insists that the credit for Real Mallorca's run to a European final at the first attempt belongs to his players – Dani, Engonga, Roa, Stankovic, Lauren et al – but the word in Spain is that the wily coach is the real architect of Mallorca's success. These days he's top of, among others, the Valencia and Betis lists. Not bad for a man who arrived in Palma as an unfancied bet from unheralded Atletico Lanus.

As a player at another modest club, Argentina's Ferro Carril Oeste, 'Western Railways', Cuper was capped eight times in the build-up to the 1978 World Cup. Unfortunately, a certain Daniel Passarella got in his way and he missed coach Cesar Luis Menotti's final cut. His dignified response to that setback sums up the man. "I was disappointed, but happy that I'd done my absolute best to make the squad...Menotti was right, anyway." It's that kind of feet-on-the-ground approach that has characterised Mallorca's rise to prominence.

Last season, Cuper's newly-promoted side finished fifth in the League, the club's highest finish, before taking Barcelona to penalties in the Spanish Cup Final. Defeating Van Gaal's all-stars in this season's Spanish Super Cup produced Mallorca's first major trophy and only Barça have spent more weeks than Cuper's men on top of the table this term. With eight games to go, a place in the Champions League was still a distinct possibility.

Cuper has achieved all this with effectively two sides. An exodus of last year's heroes means that 15 of Mallorca's current squad are freshmen. Tellingly, the protagonists have changed but the song remains the same – a 4-4-2 formation applied with military precision.

As Chelsea discovered in the semi-final, Dani and Co are masters of the rapid counter-attack, but Mallorca's success is based firmly on Spain's most miserly rearguard – only 23 goals conceded in their first 30 League games. "Mallorca have got the best defence in Europe," says Barça captain Pep Guardiola, "it's a real challenge breaking them down." And he should know: Spain's champions-elect have lost three times to Mallorca this season.

It's a formula that exports well, too. In eight Cup-winners Cup games, Mallorca have conceded only four goals, but at Villa Park, Cuper's men will face possibly the most potent strikeforce in the world. If they can snuff out Vieri, Salas, Boksic, Mancini et al, and win the last Cup-winners Cup, they'll be building statues of Hector Cuper in Palma de Mallorca. Whatever his nationality.

Architect of success...Hector Cuper

Mallorca magic...Biagini's headed goal against Chelsea put the Spaniards into the Final against Lazio

Christian spirit...Lazio's Vieri outruns the Lokomotiv defence in the semi-final

How they reached the Final

LAZIO

1ST ROUND
Lazio 1 (Nedved 37)
Lausanne 1 (Douglas 54)

Lausanne 2 (Douglas 10, Rehn 84)
Lazio 2 (Salas 7, Sergio Conceicao 26)
3-3 on agg. Lazio on away goals

2ND ROUND
Lazio 0
Partizan Belgrade 0

Partizan Belgrade 2 (Krstajic 18, Iliev 85)
Lazio 3 (Salas 43, 76, Stankovic 67)
Lazio 3-2 on agg

QUARTER-FINALS
Panionios 0
Lazio 4 (Stankovic 3, 60, Gazis og 14, Nedved 63)

Lazio 3 (Nedved 70, Stankovic 77, De la Pena 82)
Panionios 0
Lazio 7-0 on agg

SEMI-FINAL – 1ST LEG (April 8)
Lokomotiv Moscow 1 (Dzhanashia 61)
Lazio 1 (Boksic 77)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Veissiere (Fra)
Lokomotiv: Nigmatullin – Arifullin, Drozdov, Kharlachev (Maminov 85), Cherevchenko, Chugainov, Smertin (Loskov 46), Gurenko, Dzhanashia, Lavrik, Bulykin (Borodyuk 85).
Lazio: Marchegiani – Negro, Favalli, Lombardo, Mihajlovic, Pancaro, Stankovic, De la Pena, Almeyda, Salas (Mancini 73), Vieri (Boksic 65).

SEMI-FINAL – 2ND LEG (April 22)
Lazio 0
Lokomotiv Moscow 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Frisk (Swe)
1-1 agg. Lazio on away goals
Lazio: Marchegiani – Negro, Pancaro, Nesta, Mihajlovic, Lombardo, Nedved, Fernando Couto (Almeyda 46), Stankovic, Vieri (Boksic 87), Mancini (De la Pena 75).
Lok Moscow: Nigmatullin – Arifullin, Cherevchenko, Chugainov – Lavrik, Gurenko, Smertin, Kharlachev (Maminov 66), Loskov – Dzhanashia, Bulykin.

MALLORCA

1ST ROUND
Hearts 0
Mallorca 1 (Marcelino 17)

Mallorca 1 (Lopez 49)
Hearts 1 (Hamilton 76)
Mallorca 2-1 on agg

2ND ROUND
Genk 1 (Oulare 71)
Mallorca 1 (Dani 56)

Mallorca 0
Genk 0
1-1 on agg. Mallorca on away goals

QUARTER-FINALS
Varteks 0
Mallorca 0

Mallorca 3 (Ibagaza 53, Paunovic 55, Dani 75)
Varteks 1 (Balajic 88)
Mallorca 3-1 on agg

SEMI-FINAL – 1ST LEG (April 8)
Chelsea 1 (Flo 50)
Mallorca 1 (Dani 31)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 32,524. **Ref:** Jol (Hol)
Chelsea: De Goey – Ferrer (Lambourde 80), Desailly, Leboeuf, Le Saux, Petrescu, Wise, Babayaro (Flo 46), Morris, Zola (Poyet 60), Vialli.
Mallorca: Roa – M Soler, Siviero, Marcelino, Olaizola – Ibagaza (Carreras 61), Engonga, Lauren Etame-Mayer, Paunovic – Biagini (F Soler 85), Dani.

SEMI-FINAL – 2ND LEG (April 22)
Mallorca 1 (Biagini 15)
Chelsea 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 10,848. **Ref:** Krug (Ger)
Mallorca 2-1 on agg
Mallorca: Roa – Olaizola, Marcelino, Siviero (Carreras 46), M Soler – Lauren Etame-Mayer, Engonga, Stankovic (Arpon 80), Paunovic – Dani, Biagini (F Soler 67).
Chelsea: De Goey – Ferrer, Desailly, Leboeuf, Le Saux (Babayaro 46) – Petrescu (Morris 78), Di Matteo, Poyet, Wise – Flo, Zola.

WHAT THEY SAY

'If people think we're greedy, they're right!'

Roberto Mancini, Lazio

"We were over-confident early in the season, that's why we got off to such an inconsistent start. Sometimes I think we might have done better to stay at home. Nothing seemed to go right. Then, after the 3-3 draw against Roma in the first derby, we talked matters out in the dressing-room. Then things improved.

"Maybe it's coincidence that we have been playing better since I switched back towards midfield. As a youngster at Bologna I wanted to play in this role – it's just taken me to the age of 34 to achieve my ambition! Anyway, a player nowadays needs to be versatile.

Key man for Lazio...Mancini

"At first I found myself being indecisive out on the pitch: when I closed in on goal I wasn't confident about choosing whether to shoot or to pass. But it's the best solution.

"I can't honestly pretend that I would do a better job, or even as good a job, as Vieri and Salas. They are the right men to play up front. They represent the future. With Ronaldo and Batistuta they're the best in the world. They can get even better, as well. Certainly they should become the best attacking double act in the world game.

"As for the club, we're just at the start of an upward cycle. Cragnotti is building something very important here. We got to the UEFA Cup Final last season. Now we are in the Cup-winners Cup Final and we are top of the League. We want to win both. If people think we are greedy, well...they're right!" *Interview by Dominique Antognoni*

Miguel Soler, Mallorca's veteran left-back

"I thought at the start of the season that Mallorca might be the last club I was going to play for in my career so you can imagine how happy I am to get the chance to play in another European Final."

Hector Cuper, Mallorca coach

"Right through the second leg against Chelsea I was going crazy but I had to try to keep a straight face for the sake of the team. I wanted to wave flags and do crazy things out there but I had to wait until I was in the dressing-room. Our secret was that we go out for every game with a winning mentality. It was essential against Chelsea because they are such a good team that, if we had gone for the draw, we would have lost. It's not our way."

NIKE ALPHA PROJECT

MERCURIAL 2

Bang.

Milan the new contenders

Lazio slipped at the crucial moment in the *scudetto* race. Paddy Agnew reports

In the frame...Milan's Thomas Helveg tussles with Martin Jorgensen of Udinese

STAND BY for a grandstand finish to the Italian title contest. Just when it seemed that Roman club Lazio had established a commanding enough lead to be guaranteed their second *scudetto*, suddenly and surprisingly things started to go wrong.

Given that on the last two days of the season (May 16, 23) Lazio play two of their major title rivals, Fiorentina and Parma, then hold your breath for a cliff-hanger finish from which a fourth side, Milan (ever heard of them?), could yet emerge the winners.

April was an instructive month which clarified at least two matters. Firstly, there is no all-dominant side in this season's championship contest. Secondly, reigning champions Juventus have come to the end of a magnificent five-year winning cycle.

World Soccer has consistently charted the decline and fall of Juventus throughout this season. We have suggested that a number of elements (post-World Cup exhaustion, the long-term injury to Alessandro Del Piero, the controversial circumstances surrounding the departure of their winning coach of the last four years, Marcello Lippi) have all proved fundamental to that decline.

Following the appointment of Carlo Ancelotti in the wake of Lippi's controversial February resignation, however, the Juventus season seemed to have turned a corner with the side immediately re-finding winning ways. The suspicion that perhaps the Old Lady had not yet uttered her final word, certainly in the context of the Champions League, began to emerge.

That suspicion proved well-founded when Juventus went to Old Trafford to meet Manchester United in the first leg of their epic Champions League semi-final. Rather than be swept aside by a fresher, fitter and hungrier United, Juventus played their best hour of soccer all season and, in the end, could argue that the 1-1 result flattered the home side.

With hindsight, the late equaliser by Ryan Giggs was decisive. Not only did it throw United a lifeline but it sowed a large seed of doubt in the collective Juventus mind. At Old Trafford, the Italians ran out of puff in the final half-hour.

When it came to the return leg in Turin, not even the best of all possible starts, with two goals in the opening 10 minutes, could shore up Juventus. In the 80 minutes of dramatic football that followed the opening goals, United cruelly and brilliantly unmasked this year's Juventus, showing them to be a team long past their sell-by date and one whose splendid performance at Old Trafford had been nothing other than a last hurrah.

Manchester United were far and away the better side in Turin. A lesser team might have left Juventus fans and directors clinging to the illusion that all was not lost. The extent of the shipwreck effected by United made it clear for all to see – this Juventus, the Juventus created and designed by Marcello Lippi, have come to the end of the road. Even as we write, the reconstruction process is in full swing.

Many first team players will be packing their bags this summer – French World Cup-winning captain Didier Deschamps, Dutchman Edgar Davids, Argentinian Juan Esnaider, Frenchman Jocelyn Blanchard, Uruguayan Daniel Fonseca, plus Nicola Amoruso and Alessandro Birindelli could be on their way out – to be replaced by a new, younger generation of whom the only certain name is Bari midfielder Gianluca Zambrotta.

While Juventus lick their wounds, Lazio, Milan, Fiorentina and Parma are squaring up along the final stretch of the championship road with Lazio and Milan appearing to dominate. The fixture list always indicated that April would prove a difficult month for leaders Lazio: in successive games they were due to meet Milan, Roma and Juventus.

Throughout an uninspiring 0-0 home draw with Milan, Lazio had looked comfortable and had tried to play soccer in the face of a visiting side clearly determined to pick up what was to prove a highly significant away point. If that result had seemed little more than a mere hiccup, the following week's derby with Roma re-opened the entire championship contest.

Having been humiliated in four consecutive League and Italian Cup derby losses last season, Roma were in no mood to do their city rivals any favours. They were out of the UEFA Cup (eliminated by Atletico Madrid at the quarter-final stage) and long since out of the Italian Cup, so had but two possible satisfactions left for this season. Firstly, a top-four finish and subsequent Champions League qualification and, secondly, a derby win against Lazio.

In the end, Roma opened as if their season depended upon the derby, taking the game to Lazio and never letting their city cousins into the match. The game ended in a resounding 3-1 win and for the first time in months, commentators began to doubt Lazio. Were the leaders getting rattled as the pressure mounted? Or was the defeat by Roma merely another minor inconvenience?

A week later, when Juventus came, saw and conquered Lazio to the tune of another 3-1 scoreline, the alarm bells were ringing loud and clear. The pressure was beginning to tell. Even Lazio's subsequent qualification for the Cup-winners Cup Final with a 0-0 home draw against Lokomotiv Moscow (1-1 in the first leg) did not convince everyone.

In three games, Lazio had picked up one point. This would have proved catastrophic if two of their closest rivals had not had an equally hard time. Fiorentina, too, picked up just one point, in a home draw with Bari, while losing to both Inter (some achievement this season) and Bologna. Parma did little better, picking up two points from draws with Cagliari and Sampdoria, either side of a 2-1 away defeat by Milan.

And here we come to the biggest springtime surprise – Milan. For most of this season, they have looked very much in the 'under reconstruction' phase. New coach Alberto Zaccheroni and new players such as German Oliver Bierhoff certainly did not meet with instant success. Zaccheroni's gameplan seemed directed at developing a side good enough to win the title next season, not this.

However, a side containing the still-explosive striking skills of Liberian George Weah, the playmaking ability of Croat Zvonimir Boban, the mercurial class of Brazilian Leonardo and the defensive grit of Paolo Maldini, one day, sooner or later, just had to play well. That day came in a 5-1 annihilation of Udinese, 24 hours after Juventus had beaten Lazio 3-1, taking Milan into second place, one point behind Lazio.

All of a sudden we had a hell of a title battle on our hands and that is the way it will remain, right down to the wire, with a final stretch in which Milan clearly have the easier run-in.

All bets are on...

THE TITLE RUN-IN

LAZIO – Sampdoria (A), Udinese (A), Bologna (H), Fiorentina (A), Parma (H)

MILAN – Vicenza (A), Sampdoria (H), Juventus (A), Empoli (H), Perugia (A)

FIORENTINA – Juventus (A), Perugia (H), Sampdoria (A), Lazio (H), Cagliari (A)

PARMA – Roma (A), Empoli (H), Inter (A), Piacenza (H), Lazio (A)

Pro-file Antonio Conte

Good times, bad times... but still in love with the Old Lady of Turin

FOR Antonio Conte and his club, Juventus, Sunday, February 7, 1999, remains a watershed. That was the day Juventus were humiliated in a 4-2 home drubbing by Parma that was so bad it prompted coach Marcello Lippi to resign.

For both Conte and Juventus, nothing has been the same since. Conte, left out of Lippi's team for the Parma debacle, has not only been ever-present in the sides since selected by Lippi's successor, Carlo Ancelotti, but he has also developed a handy knack for scoring vital goals as well, while winning back his captain's armband in the process.

Conte has been a quintessential element in that Juventus revival and not only because of the away goals he scored against both Olympiakos in the Champions League quarter-final tie and against Manchester United in the semi-final first leg.

For 29-year-old Conte, this successful springtime has come at the end of a dour nine-month period when his footballing future seemed to lie anywhere other than Turin.

Lecce-born Conte, who played six seasons for his hometown club before joining Juventus in November 1991, admits that he thought his romance with the Old Lady had come to an end last May on the night that Real Madrid beat Juventus in the Champions League Final in Amsterdam. "At the end of the game, in which I'd played only 16 minutes, I went across to our fans and threw my shirt at them," he said. "At that moment, I was convinced that my time at the club had come to an end."

To a certain extent, Conte was indeed out. Lippi's early selections this year suggested that players like him would henceforth be consigned to the role of experienced reserve, kept out of a midfield in which Frenchmen Zinedine Zidane and Didier Deschamps, Dutchman Edgar Davids, Alessio Tacchinardi, Gianluca Pessotto and new purchase, Frenchman Jocelyn Blanchard, all seemed to be in front of him in the queue.

An early-season injury did not help matters much and, lest Conte had any doubts about which way the wind was blowing, Lippi stripped him of the captaincy and handed it to Alessandro Del Piero.

"It was Lippi who took the captaincy from me, not the dressing-room, and, what's more, it happened while I was away. It was one of the most unpleasant things that has happened to me in my career," Conte says.

Worse still, he adds, were the insinuations on the grapevine that he was finished because of a serious injury. "That was the worst thing about the last few months. I was scheduled to leave Juventus (for Atletico Madrid) but the deal was called off because the Atletico coach (Italian Arrigo Sacchi) was convinced that I had a long-term injury problem. That's all water under the bridge now, but..."

All was changed, of course, utterly changed, with the arrival of Ancelotti. The new coach's footballing philosophy is no secret. He is a man who opts for a hard-running, hard-tackling 4-4-2 line-up which puts a high premium on workrate in much the same manner as the sides coached by Sacchi, under whom Ancelotti served both as a player at Milan and as deputy coach with Italy.

Ancelotti took Conte aside soon after arriving in Turin and told him plainly that there was room for him. Remember, Ancelotti is the man who, while coach at Parma, offloaded Gianfranco Zola and cancelled the purchase of Roberto Baggio, considering both superfluous to his midfield requirements. Conte, on the other hand, is Ancelotti's type of player – gritty, determined and combative.

Not surprisingly, when Ancelotti came to name his first Juventus team for the 2-0 win at Piacenza a week after Lippi's departure, Conte was back in the side. The following week, he was on the scoresheet in a 2-0 home win against Vicenza.

A month later, he had put Juventus into the semi-finals of the Champions League by scoring a late equaliser against Olympiakos in the quarter-final, second leg. "There were only four minutes left or we would have been out and in that hothouse it wasn't exactly easy to silence 85,000 passionate Greeks..."

Conte's return from the land of forgotten reserves became

definitive in late March when the national team coach, Dino Zoff, not only gave him a surprise call-up to the squad for Italy's European Championship qualifier against Denmark but also sent him on in the second half to win his ninth cap at a moment when the exuberant Danes were looking decidedly dangerous, having equalised after giving the Italians an opening goal. As is his wont, Conte first set about plugging a series of midfield holes before rounding off a triumphant comeback by scoring the goal that gave Italy a 2-1 victory.

For a player whose last international cap had been in a 1-0 World Cup qualifying win against Georgia in Perugia on October 9, 1996 (when Sacchi was the coach), it was not bad. Always highly rated by Sacchi, Conte had never figured in the calculations of France 98 coach Cesare Maldini.

Two weeks after that splendid return to the national team, Conte made his first visit to Old Trafford a more than positive occasion, scoring in the splendid 1-1 Champions League semi-final first leg draw with Manchester United that underlined just how effectively both he and his team had recovered from their winter of discontent.

Not surprisingly, two days after that match, Juventus's director general, Luciano Moggi, told reporters that Conte's contract would be renewed, at least through to 2000.

Gloom descended on Stadio Delle Alpi once more, however, as United's astonishing triumph in the second leg deprived Juventus of a fourth successive trip to Europe's showpiece finale. It will almost certainly mean a period of team rebuilding but Conte is determined to be part of the revolution. Like the rest of the squad, he feels he has a score to settle with the Champions League but adds: "I have two dreams – to win the Final and to renew my contract. At the moment, it runs out next year. I've been here for eight years and I'd like to take that all the way to 10."

Just at the moment, Conte's chances of seeing out 10 seasons with Juventus are looking good, very good.

Paddy Agnew

An everyday tale of excess in Madrid

Spanish football's short-term outlook caused Real a truly torrid week, writes Graham Turner

Madrid woe...Alexander Mostovoi scored Celta Vigo's fourth in a 5-1 defeat of Real

LIVING from hand to mouth may not sound like an appropriate expression to use in football – unless you're Maradona, I suppose – but it can be applied to everyday life in the Spanish game.

Nobody stops to get things into perspective. Nobody thinks long-term or medium-term. Nobody is prepared to wait until the end of the season to form judgments. Events are reported with a TV news mentality. Each bulletin has a brief shelf-life and by the following day everybody has forgotten about it.

Ask Real Madrid. At the time of writing, the side had won four and lost one under John Toshack and were third in a League which has tilted sharply in Barcelona's favour. Yet the one defeat produced tidal waves of massive proportions.

It happened in Vigo. Toshack had said that four wins in four games would put Real on track for the title, and they duly pocketed 12 points.

Then came the coach's nightmare. After working all week on preparations for the big away match against Celta, he sent his players out and, propped up against a corner of the dug-out, watched them go three down in 15 minutes.

He reacted by sending on an extra front man – Fernando Morientes – and watched 'Moro' pull it back to 3-1. But Celta struck again through Alexander Mostovoi before half-time to prompt some rapid consultation in the archives. The announcement duly came that Real had not conceded four in the first half since March 1953, when they managed to lose 6-0 in Malaga. In Vigo, they limited the damage to 5-1. It was the first time Real had conceded five in the League since Barcelona beat them 5-0 in 1993-94.

Reactions were strident, to say the least. The media waded in with panache, claiming that the players were a bunch of prima donnas who'd been spoilt by success and were not prepared to work up a sweat. There was mass hair-tearing that Real had dropped out of the Champions League placings and that the financial consequences for the debt-ridden club would be dire.

> **"One defeat produced tidal waves of massive proportions"**

Toshack publicly announced that the players' attitude had been wretched and that some of them had two months to demonstrate they were worth a place in next season's squad. He added that there will definitely be new signings before the start of the next campaign and commented that certain players had hardly kicked a ball since they reported back from national team duty – a clear reference to Raul *(see profile, opposite)*.

To show the extent of media indignation, there were naughty stories related to Roberto Carlos and Ivan Campo, who had travelled to Vigo even though they were suspended. A TV camera caught them laughing and waving while brandishing mobile phones during the interval. They had to call a press conference to explain that they were phoning and waving to their wives, who had seats in the opposite stand.

Just as all the little niggles pour out in a matrimonial row, all the stories of dressing-room cliques were fanned into fresh flames. Raul and Fernando Hierro complained of the negative consequences of discussing the 'sell and buy' plans for next season, while there was ample discussion of the £23,000 fine imposed on 'Pedja' Mijatovic for his refusal to play during NATO attacks on Serbia.

Then Guti, who has raised hackles at the club by announcing he's getting married just before crucial Copa del Rey games, was sent off for two-footed attempts to separate Mijatovic and Morientes from their wedding tackle. When the team took the field on the following Sunday, Bernabeu was decked with banners accusing them of being good-for-nothing, money-grabbing mercenaries. That's the polite version.

But the Apocalypse Now backdrop was removed just as quickly as it had been installed – in 90 minutes. Toshack's side played a very solid, collective first half and took a 3-0 lead against a Valencia side who had been ahead of them in the table. Raul scored two goals which allowed him to attain his self-imposed target for the season of 21, and Morientes, whose lack of goals has caused him so much anxiety this term, found solace by scoring the opener.

The 3-1 win allowed Real to go back into the Champions League placings, with Mallorca having lost and Celta, after the euphoria of the famous victory over Real, held to a 1-1 draw by humble Alaves. After all the bile, spleen and bad blood of the previous week, everything in the garden was suddenly rosy again.

Life was even rosier for Barcelona, of course. Early goals by Frank De Boer and Patrick Kluivert laid the foundations for a 2-1 home win over Mallorca, who had beaten them three times this season, thus winning the official title of bogey team. But Barcelona have been wiping up their bogeys this season, recording, seven days previously, a 3-2 victory in Tenerife, where they hadn't won for five years, and, before that, three points in San Sebastian, where triumph had eluded them for a decade.

The win against Mallorca meant that they had taken 43 points out of a possible 48 and, with the pursuing group indulging in weekly sessions of musical chairs,

Louis Van Gaal and his merry men had established a nine-point lead.

On second thoughts, maybe it should be Louis Van Gaal and his not-so-merry men. His blunt-instrument approach continues to raise bruises in the dressing-room and he was again placed in the dock after red-carding local boy Oscar for lack of effort during a training exercise, banning him from training with the rest of the squad and putting him through a gruelling 'individual fitness programme'. Indignation reached such proportions that former left-back Julio Alberto commented that if the players had a pair of what men are supposed to have, they would mutiny. They didn't. Some of them asked the boss to re-consider and muttered *sotto voce* threats of what might happen 'if he does it again'.

Even the critics are grudgingly admitting that Barcelona are beginning to play some good football, with Luis Figo and Rivaldo showing exceptional form. Frank De Boer has added another dimension – vision – to the back line and Josep Guardiola is beginning to recover the rhythm which had been broken by his year-long injury.

The storms in teacups have not been confined to Real Madrid and Barça. Tensions within Deportivo's multinational dressing-room have been carried on to the training pitch, where Salaheddine Bassir and Lionel Scaloni were the latest to exchange kicks and punches. I may be mistaken, but this sort of incident seems to have become far more frequent in recent times.

At least Atletico Madrid's wounds have not been self-inflicted. During the home game against Villarreal, Jose Mari had his nose broken in a horrific collision with the opposition goalkeeper. The visitors, 2-0 up with three minutes to play, seemed to have won the match, but Atletico scored twice in a minute to earn their second point since Raddy Antic returned to the dug-out.

It hasn't been the happiest of returns. With the side slipping dangerously close to the relegation play-off zone, vice-president Miguel Angel Gil Marin (Jesus Gil's son) slammed the players and accused them of putting the club's future on the line. At a time when all Atletico's news seemed to be bad, it was sad to hear that Raddy Antic's father had died in Belgrade and that the Balkan hostilities had prevented him from attending the funeral. For Atletico, this season has been a case of 'some you lose and some you lose' – a pity during a year when the club have invested heavily in providing five-star facilities at Vicente Calderon stadium, which, they claim, is now the best in Madrid.

The bad news for Yosu Ortuondo was a home defeat by Racing Santander which earned him the sack from relegation-haunted Salamanca. His successor is the former Zaragoza, Valencia and Paraguay striker Carlos 'Lobo' Diarte, who began his challenge with a heartening 1-1 draw away to relegation rivals Extremadura. It was only their second away point and fifth away goal of the season.

Annihilating Austria...Spain celebrate

Camacho's new blood gets results

THERE HAS been much debate about the nuts and bolts of next season – with most people claiming you have to be nuts to play in Spain in August. There is now an agreement to start the next League campaign on August 22.

The Spanish federation originally proposed the 15th, hoping to give the national team a bit more than two weeks to prepare for Euro 2000, should they qualify. No go, said the clubs. So national coach Jose Antonio Camacho faces a major challenge in making a half-decent tilt at the championship with players who have only just come to the end of a more-gruelling-than-ever season.

Just like Real Madrid, the national team have lived through a night-and-day phase. The memorable 9-0 win over Austria prompted the media to claim that the side they had written off as no-hopers a few months ago are now world champion material. Camacho's new caps include three from the Mallorca side having such a good season – defender Marcelino, midfielder Vicente Engonga and striker Dani.

The other notable debutant is Pedro Munitis, a 23-year-old forward from Racing Santander. He is developing into a nippy, skilful, thorn-in-the-flesh sort of forward who makes things happen. The top boys are dusting off the cheque-books.

However, the national team are still suffering from the lack of opportunities for local-born products. In the past 12 months, Spain have won the European Under-21 Championship, the Meridian Cup at Under-17 level and were the top European side at the World Youth Cup in Nigeria. Yet imported labour is still proliferating, to the extent that the government is now negotiating a new deal for the 2000-2001 season. The proposal is to impose a limit of three non-EU players in each squad. This ties in with the recent decision to turn down Valladolid's appeal against the loss of three points for fielding one foreigner too many during six minutes of the home game against Betis, which, on the field, they won 2-1.

The move is being welcomed by everybody – except the club presidents, who are keen to keep the cheaper-foreign-labour door as wide open as possible.

Pro-file Raul

Spain's man of the moment. Again

AS A PLAYER, Jose Antonio Camacho was nothing if not a man who always went the distance. It's fitting then, that the standard bearer of his new Spain is a never-say-die young survivor, another Real Madrid icon in the making.

Raul Gonzalez Blanco was one of only three Spanish internationals from France 98 who was still on duty for his country's crucial Euro 2000 qualifier against Austria in March; his four goals in the 9-0 victory, Spain's third biggest ever, showed just why. Four days later he notched a hat-trick as San Marino were beaten 6-0. After a potentially fatal start in Cyprus, Spain are back in pole position in Group 6, and the 21-year-old Raul – yes, he's still only 21 – is his country's man of the moment. Again.

"The game against Austria was special," he admits, "you don't score four goals every day in a fixture like that. I've got it recorded on video so I can watch it over and over again, and I've kept my shirt from the game, too. I'm going to frame it and hang it on my living-room wall as a constant reminder of a memorable night." And, hopefully, as a harbinger of good times.

"Let's hope this is the beginning of a historic era for Spain," he continues. "It's a long time since I've seen one team so superior to another, and the communion between team and fans at Valencia was incredible."

Naturally, Raul has words of praise for the architect of the new model Spain. "Camacho is crystal clear about what he wants; a team that's ambitious and ruthless. Most importantly, he's convinced us we're winners again." Fourteen players have made their debuts since Camacho took over in October, but the coach isn't about to throw the baby out with the bath water. As he admits, three familiar names will form his side's spine: "Hierro in defence, Guardiola in midfield and Raul in attack."

Happily, gone are the days that the words Raul and jack of all trades invariably turned up in the same sentence. "As far as I'm concerned a player who scores as many goals as Raul is a striker, end of story," insists Camacho.

The Madrid-born youngster has been a saviour for club as well as country. In his short career at Real Madrid, Raul has seen more ups and downs than a trampoline. A debut at just 17 in place of Emilio Butragueno, a 5-0 win in his first Madrid-Barça game, two League titles in his first three seasons, Madrid's first European crown in three decades and a winning goal in the World Club Cup is an astonishing CV for a youngster learning his trade amid constant scandals and musical chairs at the top. Before John Toshack's arrival, Raul had seen Jorge Valdano, Arsenio Iglesias, Fabio Capello, Jupp Heynckes, Jose Camacho and Guus Hiddink come and go.

If Madrid squeeze into next season's Champions League behind Barcelona it will be largely thanks to their home-grown star. After 59 goals in 145 League games as the season started, with eight games to go this term Raul was Spain's leading scorer with 21 goals in 30 games; three more than attacking partners Mijatovic, Suker and Morientes put together.

Given that Madrid had the second worst defensive record in Spain, it's not hard to imagine where they'd be without their youthful *Senor* consistent. Even the enemy are impressed. In a recent poll carried out by a Barcelona sports paper, Raul was voted the best forward in Spain, ahead of Rivaldo, Figo *et al.* Compared with that feat, scoring seven goals in two internationals is kids' stuff.

Jeff King

Fact file

Club Real Madrid
Country Spain
Born June 27, 1977, in Madrid
International debut October 1995, v Czech Republic
International caps 22 (12 gls)
Honours Spanish League 1995, 1997; Champions League 1998; World Club Cup 1998

France

Zidane is still the key

Andre Duclos on the 'irreplaceable' ZZ

FRANCE look more and more likely to need a play-off to qualify for the Euro 2000 finals. Their 0-0 draw with Ukraine at Saint-Denis was a serious setback, and had it not been for the fine reflexes of keeper Fabien Barthez, the formidable Andrii Shevchenko might even have won the game for the visitors.

Much emphasis was laid on the absence of Zinedine Zidane and the consequent lack of flair in midfield. There can be no doubt that Zidane is peerless at the moment. But it should be remembered that after he was sent off for a very unpleasant foul in the France 98 group game against Saudi Arabia, his country had to do without him for two matches. By the time he returned, France were already in the last eight.

But you could see when Zidane played at Wembley, in the rout of England, just how vital to the running of the French team he is, and just how much young Nicolas Anelka, so deadly on that night, needs his support. In between the matches against Ukraine and Armenia, coach Roger Lemerre was quick to admit that "Zidane was irreplaceable".

So far, so good...Monaco's Claude Puel

Against Ukraine, the talented young Lyon midfielder Vikash Dhorasoo (*see profile, right*) got on for the last six minutes, but at least it was a blooding. He says that he couldn't believe it when he was called up, wondered what he was doing among all those big names, then felt at ease because the Lyon doctor was there along with some former colleagues from the Under-21 and Olympic teams.

One of the most interesting and long-lasting figures in our championship is Daniel Bravo, still good enough at 36 to hold a place in the Marseille midfield.

Sometimes, he says, he plays only a few bits and pieces of games; he thinks he would be in better form if he could play for longer. True, he admits, he suggested the policy of short spells, but "what gets me most is when people say that when I'm playing from time to time, it's to economise. In reality, playing from time to time stops me reaching top form. You need to play three or four consecutive games to find the right rhythm."

These days, Bravo inevitably finds the game much more demanding, with far more pressure, but much more money. He remembers the time when, transferred for a large sum, he did not receive anything for himself. But his longevity is something surely to be admired.

Monaco were one of his several former clubs. Now the manager is Claude Puel, formerly a player, then youth team coach. Which caused some, probably unfairly, to criticise him when Jean Tigana left the club, the whisper being that Puel's closeness to the young players had something to do with it. This he brusquely denied. He has done pretty well, though, since taking over.

When Puel is asked how he sees his future at the club, he replies that he has no idea. He, the former keeper Jean Luc Ettori and ex-international midfielder Jean Petit are the only club employees whose contracts run out at the end of this season. "Since the players have been asked not to think about contracts, the same must apply to us," he says. "What will happen will happen."

At Marseille, Stephane Porato has had an exciting season in goal. He is from Paris, but when young Porato wanted to join Matra Racing Club they said he was too small to be taken on at the centre for excellence or its equivalent.

Not discouraged, Porato wrote off all over the place, but the only reply was from far-off Toulon. No matter. Down to the port he went, had a dispute with the trainer in charge of the youth scheme but to his joy received a letter asking him to join the club.

"Four fabulous years" followed. In 1993 he joined Monaco, where that experienced keeper, Jean Luc Ettori, took him under his wing. He had to wait some time while Ettori, Fabien Piveteau and then Fabien Barthez filled the role.

But when the latter was suspended for the cannabis affair, it was young Porato who was there to take his place, in 1995-96. By the end of that season he says he knew he was up to the demands of the task and asked for a transfer. Monaco wanted him to stay; they needed two keepers, they said, even though Barthez was back. But he would play only a handful of times in Monaco's title season, so when Marseille came in for him, it was a great relief.

Porato still had three years on his Monaco contract, and even going to Marseille there was a powerful contender for the position in the German international Kopke. But the Frenchman was told that whoever was in better form would have the place.

Porato's second game was disastrous, he let in four goals, but Marseille won 5-4. And while he has stayed, the 36-year-old Kopke has gone.

Pro-file Vikash Dhorasoo

Lyon's box of tricks who needs to be more selfish

NO WONDER Lyon playmaker and recent French international debutant Vikash Dhorasoo says he hates crowds and feeling hemmed in – it shows every time he sets foot on a football pitch.

This diminutive 25-year-old is tricky, quick and an elusive runner who never allows claustrophobia to kick in, leaving markers flat-footed and devouring open spaces before unlocking a defence with a carefully-weighted through pass. He is a professional who devotes a lot of time to ensuring his boots are in perfect condition, and he plays the game in the same way: neat, tidy, precise.

There is no more accomplished midfield general in France, and it was no surprise when national coach Roger Lemerre gave him his international debut, sending him on as a late substitute in the Euro 2000 tie with Ukraine in March.

Dhorasoo had been knocking at the national team's door for some time. He had paid his representative dues at Olympic, Under-21 and military level – helping a French army side coached by a certain Roger Lemerre to win the world title in 1995 – and this season he has been in magnificent form as Lyon seek to qualify for the Champions League via a third-place finish in the First Division.

A move last summer, from perpetual top-flight strugglers Le Havre to the more ambitious Lyon, has brought big dividends. "I was with Le Havre for 14 years," says Dhorasoo. "They discovered me and made me what I am today. But there's no use denying the great difference between Le Havre and Lyon in terms of facilities, results and status. It stands to reason that my chances of international recognition increased by leaving a relegation battle at Le Havre for a club at the other end of the scale.

"I'm delighted to have been included in a French squad basically made up of world champions. But it's not an end in itself. I must be as ambitious as I possibly can and aim to be a starter for the national team one day. I know it's not a straightforward objective. But I was encouraged to hear Roger Lemerre say that I have the potential to be a 40 per cent better player. I think he's right. It's up to me to grit my teeth and see to it that I carry on improving."

Dhorasoo, whose parents come from Mauritius, certainly has plenty of midfield strings to his bow. For most of his time at Le Havre he was used in a holding role, briefed to win the ball and distribute it simply, and it is only in the past three seasons that he has graduated from all-action artisan into a strategist of immense promise.

His versatility, inventiveness and ability to put team-mates in scoring positions are unquestioned. But he has one clear flaw – his finishing. In four seasons in Le Havre's first team he managed only four goals, and despite Lyon coach Bernard Lacombe setting him a target of 10 this term, his strike-rate has not improved.

"It used to be the case that I got angry when people complained I didn't score enough," he says. "It was my opinion that every player has his style, his strengths, and mine were to win the ball and pass it well. I didn't want to become obsessed about a lack of goals.

"But now I see it as constructive criticism. I need to get into scoring positions more often, to take more risks in this area, and be more composed when chances fall to me. I must be more selfish, though it's not my nature."

Dhorasoo need not be too concerned about his deficiencies as a marksman. Former France midfield ace Jean Tigana was often a stranger to the scoresheet, but was a world-class performer all the same. Vikash Dhorasoo is from the same brilliant mould.

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Club Lyon
Country France
Born October 10, 1973, in Harfleur
Previous club Le Havre
International debut March 1999, v Ukraine
International caps 1 (0 goals)
Honours World Military Cup 1995

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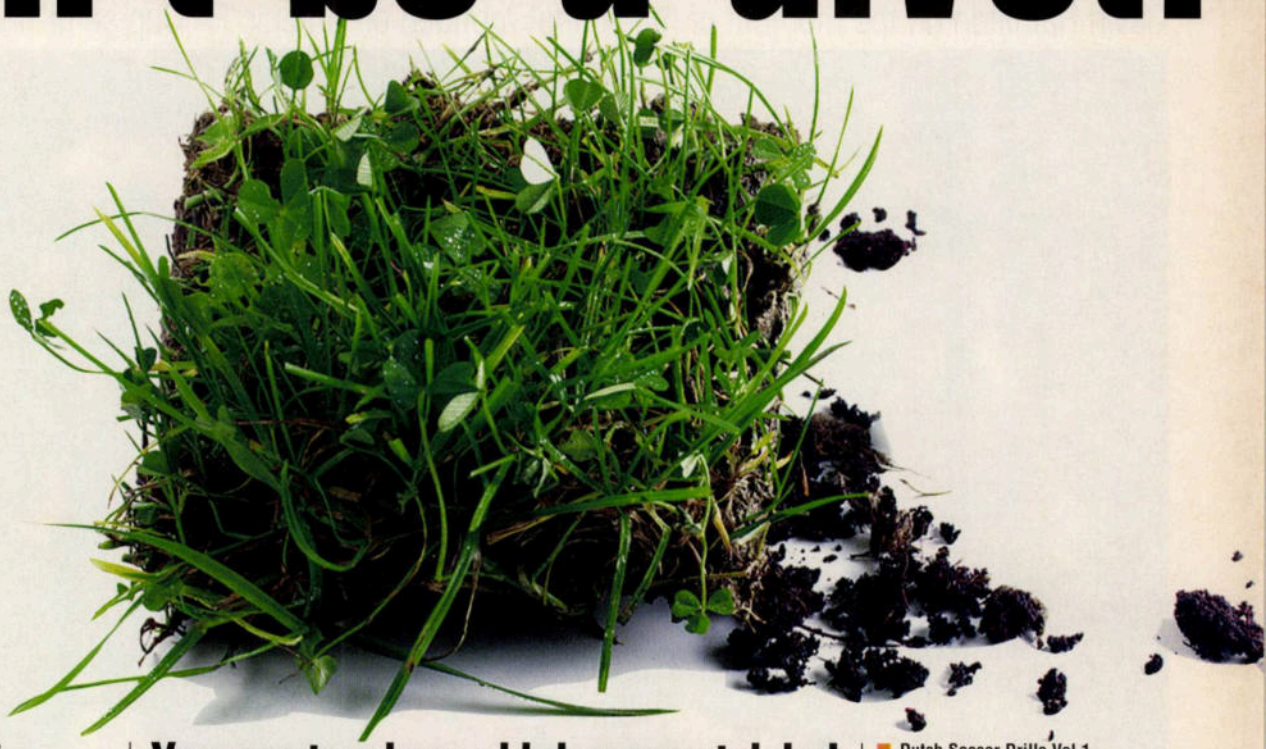

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A great Giggs goal keeps treble hopes alive

Gavin Hamilton on the moment of magic that rounded off an epic FA Cup semi-final

Goal in a million...Tony Adams is left helpless as Ryan Giggs finishes off his magnificent solo run with the shot that put Manchester United into the FA Cup Final

THE FA CUP is alive and well; rumours of its demise have been greatly exaggerated. An epic semi-final replay between Manchester United and Arsenal has restored faith in the world's oldest knockout competition.

The match, won 2-1 by United, had everything: quality goals from David Beckham and Dennis Bergkamp, a sending off (Roy Keane), a missed penalty in second-half injury time (Bergkamp, saved by Peter Schmeichel), a controversial disallowed goal (Nicolas Anelka) and an abundance of attacking football. It was settled by an extraordinary extra-time goal by Ryan Giggs.

"I don't remember much about it," said Giggs. "I just got the ball and ran." From his own half, past five Arsenal defenders, before firing an unstoppable shot past David Seaman into the roof of the net. From start to finish it lasted less than 10 seconds.

"We were hanging on for grim death and then Giggs produced something out of this world," United manager Alex Ferguson said afterwards. "John Barnes's goal against Brazil was special. Ricky Villa's in the [FA Cup] Final against Manchester City was special. But this one stands alone.

"These are the nights you never forget, as supporters, players or managers."

Any thoughts that United were prepared to sacrifice the FA Cup in their pursuit of the Champions League and Premiership title were laid to rest by the effort and determination of their players. Ferguson was quick to pay tribute.

"When it comes to tradition, Manchester United's is hard to beat, and that tradition embraces courage," he said. "Manchester United sides have never given in. We didn't tonight."

Ferguson had rested several of the players who had competed in the goalless stalemate four days previously. Teddy Sheringham and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer came in for Andy Cole and Dwight Yorke, and gave a credible demonstration of the strength of United's squad system.

Giggs was rested, but he replaced Jesper Blomqvist on the hour. The timing of his goal, with 12 minutes of extra time remaining, made it all the more special.

The match was the last FA Cup semi-final to be settled by a replay; from next season the Cup will bow to the demands of the Champions League, with ties settled by penalty shoot-out after 120 minutes.

United will claim that they deserved their victory after referee David Elleray, on the advice of his linesman, ruled out a perfectly good goal from Keane in the first match.

The other semi-final also was dogged by a refereeing controversy. Newcastle beat Tottenham 2-0, but not before Spurs had been denied a penalty for what seemed a clear handball by Nikos Dabizas. The score remained 0-0 until the second half of extra time, when Alan Shearer converted a penalty after Sol Campbell handled. Shearer added a second with an emphatic shot with seconds remaining.

For some, the season is over. Liverpool are limping sadly towards the summer. Michael Owen damaged a hamstring against Leeds and will not play again before August.

Robbie Fowler also misses the rest of the season, after deciding not to appeal against his six-game ban imposed as a result of his indiscretions towards Graeme Le Saux and his unfunny 'coke- snorting' routine. A broken nose sustained during a fight in a hotel also ruled him out of England's friendly in Hungary and he now has time to contemplate the likelihood that, if his behaviour does not improve, he will be on his way out of Anfield.

On a brighter note, Peter Reid's Sunderland have won promotion back to the Premier League less than 12 months after they lost the First Division play-off Final on penalties to Charlton, while Fulham, inspired by Kevin Keegan and fortified by Mohamed Al Fayed's millions, have been promoted to Division One.

SCOTLAND

The Big Two grow bigger and bigger

FOR THE second year in succession the championship seems destined to remain unresolved until the last day.

Rangers and Celtic are matching strides in the race towards the winning post, and a close finish to the inaugural season of the Scottish Premier League looks certain.

The Big Two also are due to clash in the Scottish Cup Final at the refurbished Hampden Park on May 29.

The strength of Celtic and Rangers has always been a feature of Scottish football, but some years have passed since their twin superiority was so distinctly evident. For weeks the championship race has been a two-pronged battle, and neither club met much resistance on the way to the Cup Final, either.

Financially, the gap between them and the rest grows ever wider. Celtic's frugality has largely disappeared since Allan MacDonald replaced Fergus McCann as chairman, and the four-year contract signed by Swedish striker Henrik Larsson is believed to be worth £40,000 a week. Larsson has been most impressive since arriving at Parkhead, where crowds are now around the 60,000 mark.

MacDonald also has hinted at the possible return of a Celtic legend, Kenny Dalglish, as manager. There are doubts about the health of the veteran Jozef Venglos, and Dalglish – who left Celtic for Liverpool 22 years ago – is a possible replacement.

Rangers must carry on without Jonas Thern, who has retired because of the injury problems that afflicted the later stages of his career. He will long be remembered by Ibrox fans for his stunning 25-yard volley in one of last season's Old Firm derbies.

Manager Dick Advocaat moved quickly to strengthen his midfield by signing Claudio Reyna from German club Wolfsburg. Reyna, who grew up in New Jersey, is the current US captain, and made his debut for Rangers as they laboured to a 1-1 draw against Dundee.

Hibernian, relegated last season, raced back to the top flight under Alex McLeish. The relegation issue this time is clouded by rumours concerning a possible merger of Dundee and Dundee United, the pair having spent recent months trying to claw their way out of the drop zone.

Alan Fairley

In the money...Henrik Larsson

WALES

Paula puts champions on the market

BARRY TOWN have been put up for sale after winning the championship for the fourth year in a row. They rounded it off in style with a 6-2 win over Carmarthen Town.

Owner Paula O'Halloran's other business commitments are occupying more and more of her time, her family have no interest in taking over, so selling while Barry are on a high seems the best option.

With one League game to play this season, Barry's four-year record is: Played 149, won 119, drawn 24, lost 6, goals for 436, against 102, points 381.

Llanelli, managed by former Welsh international Leighton James, and so long overshadowed by their rugby union rivals, seem likely to win promotion.

The national team did poorly in their Euro 2000 qualifier in Switzerland and are unlikely to take any points from their visit to Italy, so the home games against the Danes and the Swiss may indicate whether they have the ability to take second place in their group.

Mel Thomas

N IRELAND

No goals mean no Euro 2000

FADING hopes of qualifying for Euro 2000 were finally dashed when Lawrie McMenemy's team were beaten 3-0 by Germany in Belfast and drew 0-0 with Moldova four days later in Chisinau.

Only three goals have come in five qualifying games, which indicates Northern Ireland's problem, and it looks as if the remaining matches, and a prestige friendly against world champions France in Belfast in August, will be used to try out some players from the Under-21 squad, who had an excellent 1-0 win over Germany.

The first managerial casualties of the season in the Premier Division were at Newry Town, where joint bosses Ollie Ralph and Harry Fay resigned for "personal reasons" after a disappointing 2-1 defeat by Linfield, which cost Newry, promoted last April, any chance of qualifying for the UEFA Cup.

Distillery, champions of the First Division, will be known as Lisburn Distillery from next season.

Roy Kitson

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New man at the helm...Austria coach Otto Baric

Baric quits LASK for the top task

AUSTRIA

THE NATIONAL team's 9-0 defeat by Spain in Valencia had immediate consequences, with Herbert Prohaska resigning as coach after discussions with the FA president, Beppo Mauhart. Prohaska, usually a winner as a player at home and in Italy, guided Austria to the World Cup last summer, but memories are short.

Despite this heavy reverse Austria could well manage second place in their European Championship qualifying group. Even so, Prohaska has gone, and a hectic search for a successor then followed.

Initially, Ivica Osim of Sturm Graz looked to be the man, with Hans Krankl and Gustl Starek among the candidates. Even Berti Vogts was mentioned, Roy Hodgson was interviewed, and Horst Hrubesch was in the frame, too. However, he apparently did not want to apply, and was keen to persuade Mauhart to stay loyal to Prohaska.

Then someone who had eyed the job for several years came on to the scene – the 57-year-old Croatian Otto Baric, latterly in charge at LASK Linz. After some hesitation the FA announced his appointment as the 27th trainer to sit on the Austrian bench.

Prohaska was not out of work for long. Austria Wien took him on as the replacement for Zdenko Verdenik, even though Friedl Koncilia had been in interim charge and Prohaska is officially on the FA staff until the season's end.

The Violets can do with Prohaska. At present they are a poor team and they are likely to be without European soccer next season at Horr stadium, which is to be renamed after Austria's most famous player, Matthias Sindelar.

Rapid Wien have managed to break Sturm Graz's 18-month hold on the top spot in the League. The Greens are simply not losing, while Grazer AK and Sturm are far from consistent. The Styrian derby drew a full house to Schwarzenegger stadium, where Grazer's Igor Pamic scored the decider from a penalty.

Bob Vaughan

PORTUGAL

The words on the wall say it all

THE WRITING is on the wall – literally – for Graeme Souness. Despite all his efforts for Benfica, and his defiance of his critics, the words are there for all to see. "Souness out" is the message scrawled on the walls at the Stadium of Light.

Everything reached a calamitous climax when the Lisbon press uncovered the big secret: Benfica had agreed terms with their next manager.

He is the German Jupp Heynckes, who last season helped Real Madrid to win the Champions League, only to be sacked a few days later.

Benfica at first denied the story. Then they took refuge in a 'no comment' response. When we asked Souness about it, he replied: "Nothing to do with me. It's all speculation. I'm the Benfica manager and I expect a good result at Braga."

He did not get one. Braga won 2-1, Benfica's miserable display leaving them nine points behind leaders Porto and four behind second-placed Boavista.

Third place, of course, is nothing to be ashamed of in most countries. But in Portugal it's failure. If you're Benfica, it's disaster.

Souness has shown courage and good humour in dealing with the media and the fans, but there is no doubt that many of his signings have not worked.

Saunders, Charles and Harkness are widely regarded as failures, Pembridge slightly less so. Thomas never fitted in and the crowd were against him from the start, so much so that the directors ordered Souness not to pick him again.

In defence of Souness, he had little money to play with, and he deserves praise for achieving what he has, in view of the financial constraints.

But he has not delivered the championship. And Heynckes, we believe, starts work at Benfica on July 1.

Alberto da Silva

BELGIUM

Genk keep going

IF Club Brugge have cause to reflect on the day they effectively lost their League title, they will decide on Sunday, April 18.

That was the evening they expected to regain the leadership from Genk. Indeed, they could have gone top if they had held on to the lead given them by Jankauskas, but Origi came up with an equaliser to delight the majority of the fans in the Genk stadium.

The draw puts coach Antheunis and his players within reach of their first title. Whatever happens, Genk will not be short of support next season. Already 15,000 applications for season tickets have been received, putting the little club on a par with Brugge and Anderlecht.

Four successive 1-0 defeats have increased the pressure on national coach Georges Leekens. He has used 62 players in his attempts to create a strong side, but admitted after the latest defeat, at home to Bulgaria, that "there are not even 40 Belgian players of international calibre".

Nicholas Harling

REP IRELAND

Something has got to give

THERE is a new venue and a novel pairing for this year's FAI Harp Lager Cup Final on May 9.

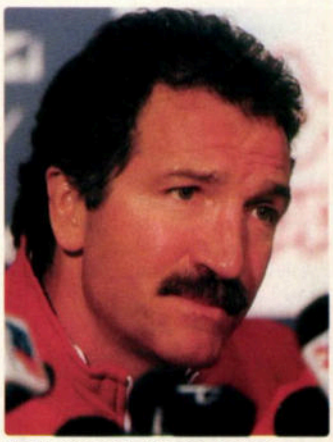
Tolka Park, home of Shelbourne FC, will host its first Final since the 1984 replay, and Bray Wanderers play Finn Harps, both having a 100 per cent success rate in finals – one win each.

Bray probably would swap their Cup appearance for a place in the Premier Division next season. But their semi-final win over Shelbourne has given the club a lift and they may now avoid the drop to the First Division.

St Patrick's Athletic are now hot favourites to retain their Premier title. Dundalk look almost certain to go down, and the other clubs involved in the battle to stay up are Sligo Rovers, Waterford and UCD.

The two Irelands will meet in a friendly for the first time on May 29, at Lansdowne Road, in a benefit for the Omagh Fund. All six previous games between the Republic and Northern Ireland have been either European Championship or World Cup qualifiers.

Sean Creedon



On his way out...Graeme Souness

HOLLAND

Ajax cling to Euro hope

ONE of the worst seasons in memory for Ajax players, officials and fans could end without the club winning a single trophy.

Ajax are down to eighth in the League and out of the running for one of the automatic European places. They also lost in the group stage of the Champions League, and their last hope is the Dutch

Cup, in which they will meet Fortuna Sittard in the Final.

Fortuna were very impressive when beating PSV 3-1 in one semi-final, whereas Ajax had to struggle desperately against the potential champions, Feyenoord, before winning 2-1.

A crushing 4-1 defeat by Cambuur Leeuwarden in the League was such a humiliation that no fewer than 15 players are to be allowed to leave – some of their own volition, others because coach Jan Wouters has no further use for them.

On top of all that, two brothers are being taken out of the celebrated Ajax youth academy because their father says that it "leaves much to be desired and the boys will be better off out of it".

He's not any old father, either: he is Johan Seedorf, father and manager of Clarence Seedorf, now with Real Madrid.

The bottom club, NAC Breda, have sacked coach Ronald Spelbos, after only six months.

The national team drew 1-1 with Argentina in a friendly that was marred by the dismissal of Edgar Davids, who scored with a 25-metre shot but then fouled Gabriel Batistuta and was ordered off. Batistuta equalised a few minutes from the end.

Klaas-Jan Droppert

Marseille revisited...Holland and Argentina drew 1-1 in a 'friendly' in Amsterdam

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Pro-file Hugo Leal

Benfica whizzkid caught up in contract wrangle

CATCH HIM while you can, Benfica fans. Although a regular first-teamer for less than a season, midfield whizzkid Hugo Leal could soon be moving towards the Stadium of Light exit.

The 1998-99 campaign has so far been an unqualified success for the 18-year-old, who has established himself in the Benfica starting 11, won his first full cap, against Holland, in February, and been voted Portugal's Discovery of the Year. Now, a dozen years after snapping up another Portuguese prodigy, Paulo Futre from FC Porto, Atletico Madrid are reported to be at the head of a pack of clubs seeking to persuade the financially-challenged Benfica to cash in on their young gem.

Meanwhile, controversy rages at the Lisbon club's HQ about the validity of Leal's contract. Like all new Portuguese professionals, he signed a four-year deal, in summer 1996, but the then club president, Manuel Damasio, increasingly aware of the youngster's talent, offered a four-year contract extension the following April. Apparently, it was signed and sealed by both parties.

Some two years later, however, the legality of this 'second contract' has become a hotly disputed issue. It is the belief of Damasio's successor, Joao Vale e Azvedo, that the second contract is legally watertight, and he insists that Leal is tied to the club until 2003. Leal's aides argue that Portuguese law stipulates a first contract can be for only four years, and they believe the player's contractual obligations to Benfica run out at the end of next season. FIFA has now been approached to arbitrate.

Hugo Leal has long been considered one of Portuguese football's great hopes. He was born in the seaside town of Cascais, a 30-minute drive from Lisbon, and was on Benfica's books at the age of 13. His magnificent touch and vision made him the attacking heartbeat of the national schoolboy and junior sides, and he was at his influential best as Portugal's Under-16s gained back-to-back European titles in 1995 and 1996.

With Leal also instrumental in Benfica's domestic youth championship success in 95-96, it was just a matter of time before he made the first team. His breakthrough came last season, with four League appearances, but this term he has been virtually ever-present, illuminating proceedings with his wonderful range of passing skills, perceptive movement and maturity.

In Portugal much is made of the so-called 'lost generation' of players from the nation's World Youth Cup victories in 1989 and 1991. Apart from a quarter-final spot at Euro 96, the likes of Joao Pinto, Fernando Couto, Rui Costa, Figo and Jorge Costa rarely delivered at senior international level. But the hope is that Leal and other young guns such as Benfica team-mate Nuno Gomes and Sporting Lisbon attacker Simao Sabrosa will continue to shine in the full national side as they have at junior level.

"Hugo Leal is a young player with extraordinary technical qualities," says the former Benfica and Portuguese great Eusebio. "But apart from his amazing skills, what makes me believe he has a bright future is his humility. He has character and personality and the determination to get to the very top." An endorsement, indeed.

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Club Benfica
Country Portugal
Born May 21, 1980, in Cascais
Previous club Alcabideche
International debut February 1999, v Holland
International caps 1 (0 goals)
Honours European Under-16 Championship 1995, 1996

Out of action...a gashed hand forced Rustu Recber to miss the Besiktas game

Troubles galore for Fenerbahce

TURKEY

POOR Fenerbahce! Their hopes of taking the championship suffered a series of blows in the latest of the Istanbul derbies, at home to Besiktas. The troubles began when international goalkeeper Rustu Recber needed eight stitches in an injured hand. He claimed he had sustained the injury while cleaning the studs in his boots, but later reports alleged that he had been cut when breaking a window during an argument with his wife. Whatever the reason, Recber had to miss the match.

Only seven minutes had gone when Danish defender Jes Hogh handled, conceding a penalty and being sent off. Mehmet scored from the spot, and shortly afterwards Fenerbahce lost Nigerian Uche Okechukwu, who broke a leg in a collision with deputy goalkeeper Murat Pahin. Uche was the second Fenerbahce player to break a leg in six weeks, following Metin Diyadin.

Star striker Elvir Baljic was later booked and now faces suspension, and in the circumstances Fenerbahce did well to restrict Besiktas to a 2-1 win. Although the club won their next two matches – Hogh broke his nose in the second of them – they were eight points behind Galatasaray and five behind Besiktas, with only six matches left. Only the top two go into the Champions League next season.

So, despite the outlay of some £35million on players in recent months, Fenerbahce seem to have little hope of stopping Galatasaray from taking a third successive title.

Turkey's hopes of qualification for Euro 2000 rose slightly with a 2-0 win over Moldova. Hakan Sukur scored in the 34th minute, and Sergen Yalcin added the second in injury time. This was the 400th goal scored by Turkey in full internationals.

Turkey now have 10 points from four games, but all of them have been at home.

Hasan Cemali

GREECE

Olympiakos on course for three in a row

A THIRD successive championship seems on the cards for Olympiakos Piraeus, who lead by four points from AEK Athens with eight games to play. Panathinaikos are third, 12 points behind Olympiakos.

Another Piraeus club, Ethnikos, are still seeking their first win, having drawn eight and lost 17.

AEK Athens showed the world that sport is above politics by visiting war-torn Belgrade to play a benefit friendly with Partizan (*see page 46*).

Press reports in Greece claimed that the British government had asked AEK's owners, ENIC, headed by Bahamas-based British businessman Joe Lewis, to cancel the match, but ENIC refused, saying that they respected the decision to play it. Proceeds from the game went to Yugoslavian victims of the war.

Vasilis Daniel replaced Anghel Iordanescu as national coach following the Euro 2000 defeat by Norway. Daniel, a former Panathinaikos coach, began his reign with a 0-0 draw away to Latvia in another qualifier.

Lou Economopoulos

ISRAEL

Win follows tragedy

A CONVINCING 3-0 home victory over Cyprus in the Euro 2000 qualifiers put the national side back on course to challenge for a place in the finals.

They did so despite the sudden death of the assistant coach, Nahum Stelmach, two days before the game. He had a heart attack while on his way to Valencia to scout on the match between Spain and Austria, who are in the same Euro group as Israel.

The players responded by putting on an impressive performance in memory of their hero and father figure. Stelmach, who was 62, had become a legend for Israeli fans by heading an impressive goal past the great Lev Yashin in the fledgling nation's 2-1 home defeat by the Soviet Union in 1956.

In all he scored 22 goals in 61 internationals. At club level, he played for Hapoel Petah in the late 1950s and early 1960s when the team swept to five straight League titles.

Soon after the Cyprus match, coach Shlomo Scharf indicated his interest in managing Maccabi Haifa next season in an arrangement that would leave him still in overall charge of the national side. To the surprise of many commentators the Israel FA supported the idea, although Scharf is under exclusive contract to lead the national squad until the end of the Euro 2000 qualifying campaign.

In the League, Hapoel Haifa continued to hurtle towards their first title. They are nine points ahead of Maccabi Tel Aviv with six matches left.

Derek Fattal

MALTA

Do or die for Birkirkara

BIRKIRKARA'S 5-1 defeat of Rabat Ajax fired a sharp warning to all the critics who have written them off. The victory offered them renewed hope of bringing home that elusive first championship, though their chances are still slim.

Valletta still hold a five-point lead with only four games to play, despite dropping two important points against Rabat in a 0-0 draw.

Domenico Aquilina

CROATIA

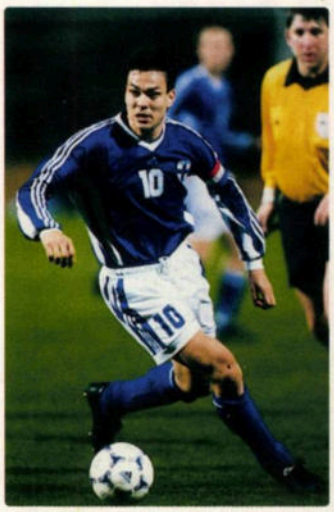
New system starts next season

A NEW League structure will be introduced next season in the hope that it will increase the popularity of the game. The 12 clubs will play each other three times, giving a total of 33 rounds.

This season the top three from each of two groups of six will play off to decide the title, while the other six meet to settle who goes down.

The top six are Croatia Zagreb, Rijeka, Hajduk Split, Osijek, Varteks Varazdin and Hrvatski dragovoljac Zagreb, who despite their name play their home games in Slavonski Brod, 200km from the capital.

Zdravko Reic



On his way...Jari Litmanen

FINLAND

Litmanen to leave

AS MANY people expected, Jari Litmanen, Finland's most successful footballer ever, will leave Ajax at the end of the season.

He said: "I've spent seven wonderful years at Ajax, winning almost everything possible at club level. It's been great, and I love Amsterdam, but I need a change."

The indifferent form of the Dutch side

– and Litmanen – has led to speculation that this is why he is going, but the player is quick to deny it. "Our recent form has nothing to do with my leaving," he says. "I've thought about this for over a year now."

His destination is uncertain, but the indications are that it will be Barcelona.

Finland were beaten 2-0 by Germany in a vital Euro 2000 qualifier. Now they must win their remaining three home matches to keep in touch.

Pentti Hietanen

ICELAND

Thordarson growing in prestige

A 2-0 WIN in Andorra and a 1-1 draw with Ukraine underlined Iceland's fast-growing reputation as the major surprises of the Euro 2000 campaign to date.

Having gone a goal behind in Kyiv, coach Gudjon Thordarson's side fought back to equalise through Stoke City defender Larus Orri Sigurdsson. The result stretched Iceland's run of unbeaten games to an unprecedented nine in a row and confirmed Thordarson as one of the best coaches in the game today on a results-to-resources ratio.

Fans of Reykjavik's KR are planning to open the country's first soccer-based radio station, which will broadcast live from the club's ground on matchdays.

Rab Christie

DENMARK

AaB open title race

SOREN FREDERIKSEN struck his 15th goal of the season to give AaB Aalborg a surprise 2-1 victory away to rivals Brondby. The victory halted Brondby's march towards a hat-trick of titles, and left AB still two points clear of AaB, with Brondby another point further adrift.

Frederiksen is among many strikers who have failed to shine in the national team, but at domestic level he is proving a match-winner. So is keeper Jimmy Nielsen, dubbed the new Schmeichel on account of his prowess, his blond hair and his remarkable facial similarity.

Nielsen, still only 21, has been watched by a bevy of European scouts, including Newcastle and Derby, but has resisted the temptation to move. He had one unproductive spell with Millwall as a 17-year-old, and will wait to go abroad again until he is guaranteed regular top-flight football.

"I don't want to go to England just for the sake of it. Playing in the first team is a necessity," he said.

Brian Laudrup finally scored his first goal for FC Copenhagen in a 2-2 draw at Silkeborg. But he has so far failed to provide the anticipated boost to the team. They have slumped to fifth, 10 points off the pace.

At the bottom, B93 and Aarhus Fremad look doomed.

Jim Holden

NORWAY

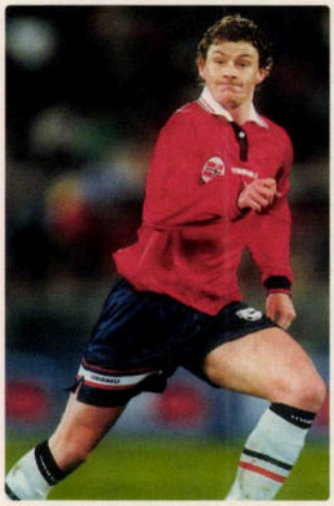
Solskjaer double stakes his claim

AFTER wasting points at home in their first qualifiers for Euro 2000, the national side, under coach Nils Johan Semb, hit back with a 2-0 win in Greece.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer scored both goals and said after the game: "I hope I have convinced the manager that I am more than good enough for this position."

On the season's first day, promoted Odd Grenland beat Viking 2-1, and in their next game defeated Stabaek 3-2.

The team used to be one of the aristocrats of Norwegian soccer, having won the Cup 11 times. But the last occasion was in 1931, and the Grenland area has been without a top-flight representative since 1967.



Two goals...Ole Gunnar Solskjaer

Lillestrom have struggled financially in the past couple of seasons, but shock wins against Brann and Rosenborg show that coach Arne Erlandsen has improved the team on very limited resources.

Sigurd Odegaard

SWEDEN

Arild could be crucial

ARILD STAVRUM, with 18 goals last season, could be the man to fire Helsingborgs to their first Swedish title for 58 years. And the Norwegian got on the scoresheet on this season's opening day as Helsingborgs beat IFK Gothenburg 3-1.

The club's line-up is impressive, but full-back Erik Edman and midfielder Marcus Lantz will move to Torino in the summer.

Potential title winners Malmo have a strong front three in Mats Lilienberg, Nicklas Kindvall and big Dejan Pavlovic, but started with a 2-1 defeat away to Vastra Frolunda.

Champions AIK made a major coup in the transfer market by signing Leicester defender Pontus Kaamark, who was wanted by all Sweden's top clubs.

Pentti Hietanen

Pro-file Jesper Gronkjaer

Winger whose Denmark career can only get better

WHAT IS it about Jespers? Remember the World Cup of 1986 when Jesper Olsen's horrendous back pass sent the famous Danish Dynamite side hurtling to a shock 5-1 defeat against Spain?

Everyone did when Jesper Gronkjaer made a similar catastrophic error within 30 seconds of his debut for Denmark, at home to Italy in March, in a Euro 2000 qualifier that the Danes could not afford to lose. Gronkjaer's gruesome back pass gifted Italy their opening goal in a 2-1 victory in front of a capacity 41,000 crowd at the Parken, and the distraught youngster was substituted soon after half-time.

One of the first to express sympathy was Olsen, now working as a travel agent in Manchester. "He will be playing it over and over in his mind," said Jesper the First. "But these things happen in football and you have to put them behind you. Of course, in a little country like Denmark everybody will focus on such incidents, especially as both matches were lost. But Gronkjaer must remember that he is a top-quality footballer with skills that all Danish fans want to see.

"I still have bad dreams about my back pass, and it's still the first thing people want to ask me about. But as a player I learned from it, and he will, too."

The two Jespers have much more in common than the fact that they have committed blunders in internationals. Both are left-wingers with scintillating speed and skill, and both began to forge their international careers while at Ajax Amsterdam.

It was Gronkjaer's superb form with the Dutch side that prompted what many felt was an overdue international call-up. The 21-year-old joined Ajax from AaB Aalborg for £2.5million last summer, and a hat-trick in a 4-1 win away to MVV Maastricht in March proved that Jesper the Second had finally come to terms with life in Holland after a difficult start – the club had struggled in the early part of the season under Danish coach Morten Olsen.

As a teenager, Gronkjaer had been courted by many of Europe's top clubs, including Barcelona and Manchester United, but he eventually opted for the Ajax finishing school for talented youngsters.

His pace and trickery have tormented a succession of defenders recently – and now his character and mental strength will be tested to the full. Can he bounce back from what Danish papers called the worst start to a Denmark career in history? National coach Bo Johansson believes so, saying: "Such an incident can have an effect on a player. But Jesper showed good spirit afterwards and I am convinced that he will get over it."

Jesper the Second certainly has the talent to help Denmark overcome the loss of the Laudrups. Time will tell if he has the temperament, too.

Jim Holden

Fact file

Club Ajax Amsterdam (Hol)
Country Denmark
Born August 12, 1977, in Thiburg
Previous club AaB
International debut March 1999, v Italy
International caps 1 (0 goals)

Players' protest...at the Partizan v AEK friendly and, inset, Predrag Mijatovic

Waiting for the bombing to end

Vladimir Novak reports from the war zone

YUGOSLAVIA

THIS MAY seem unbelievable, but it has become a sad reality that Yugoslav soccer has become accustomed to the huge problems caused by politics and wars. After the collapse of the former Yugoslavia, the national team were kicked out of Euro 92 due to UN sanctions, despite having qualified for the finals. They were also banned from playing any internationals, which meant no qualifying campaigns for USA 94 and Euro 96, and club sides were not allowed to compete in European tournaments.

Now, after only three years of peace, the country is confronted with another war and Yugoslav soccer is again in an unenviable position, to say the least. Since the beginning of NATO air strikes, on March 24, all League games have been called off, and as the bombing continued, there has been no possibility of the season continuing.

A couple of days before the air strikes started, UEFA was forced to cancel Yugoslavia's Euro 2000 qualifiers against Croatia and Macedonia, scheduled to be played in Belgrade on March 27 and 31 respectively. The new dates for these games are August 18 and September 5, when the situation in the region may have calmed. Otherwise, the national team could again face serious troubles.

In the meantime, Yugoslav clubs continued to train, and in spite of the air-raid sirens, a number of friendly matches were played. Undoubtedly the most attractive fixture was the encounter between Partizan Belgrade and AEK Athens. The fact that AEK travelled to Belgrade in such hard times was indeed a fine gesture.

The match, watched by 15,000 in Partizan stadium, was a 1-1 draw, but the result was the least significant thing. The scenes of genuine friendship between Yugoslav and Greek supporters, the sign that read 'NATO stop the war, stop the bombing' – on show as the players from both teams entered the pitch – and the fact that the day's entire income was dedicated to humanitarian purposes were much more memorable.

As far as off-field activities were concerned, the most interesting involved Dragan Stojkovic, Dejan Savicevic and Predrag Mijatovic, who suggested that all Yugoslav players with clubs in NATO countries should refuse to play until the bombing in Yugoslavia is stopped. This protest action was supported by the YFA, stressing that such a boycott was not mixing politics and sport. Branko Bulatovic, the general secretary, said: "It's about whether you can concentrate on competitive football, knowing that bombs are falling on your homeland, and thinking about your families, who spend most of the time in shelters. This is a purely human issue."

But, as expected, club commitments meant that the boycott was by no means universally observed. While some players remained consistent and skipped one game – like Mijatovic, who was fined £23,000 by Real Madrid – others played and expressed their protest by wearing black armbands and T-shirts with anti-war messages under their club shirts.

Another initiative by Yugoslav players was the start of a humanitarian fund for the victims of the NATO air strikes against their country.

RUSSIA

Record crowds as new season starts

A RECORD average of 17,500 spectators watched the first round of the Russian League's eighth tournament.

Moscow Spartak, six-times national champions, beat Alaniya, the only other previous winners, 1-0 in Vladikavkaz. The game went ahead despite fears of terrorist attacks. A recent bomb explosion in one of the city's markets had killed 60 people and led to UEFA changing the venue of the Russia v Andorra Euro 2000 qualifier from Vladikavkaz to Moscow.

After two victories – against Armenia in Yerevan (3-0) and Andorra in Moscow (6-1) – Russia now face world champions France in Saint Denis on June 5 and Iceland in Moscow on June 9.

"The situation is easy for us," said national manager Oleg Romantsev. "We just have to win all the games from now on!" Indeed, losing even two points will mean no place in the final tournament.

Oleg Veretennikov scored the first goal of 1999, for Rotor. He was Russia's top scorer last season and chose to stay another year in Volgograd, despite the fact that he and his young daughter suffered an acid attack by a stranger last autumn. The police never found the man responsible. Veretennikov suffered minor burns, but Tanya was successfully treated in Israel and will have no facial scars.

Sergei Yuran, who joined Spartak from Bochum this year, badly cut a foot on a broken bathroom tile and had to miss the team's first three games. Despite his absence, Spartak won them all to establish an early lead.

Victor Gusev

BULGARIA

Stoichkov plans to take over

HRISTO STOICHKOV simply cannot be kept out of the news. Having been less than amused at being substituted in the friendly with Belgium and in the Euro 2000 qualifier against Luxembourg, the player now appears to be gearing up to gain revenge on those responsible, and perhaps quite soon.

Set for revenge...Hristo Stoichkov

The suggestion is that once he has tied up his affairs in Spain and Japan, he will have one last hurrah as a player, probably in the Group 5 tie with England in June, and then take over the national team.

Whether current national coach Dimitar Dimitrov has been consulted about this, and whether the Bulgarian federation are party to it all, is not clear.

A Euro 2000 play-off place could be a possibility if Bulgaria beat England. If not, Stoichkov has said he will settle for preparing the squad for the next World Cup. He hopes to have two of his international colleagues, Lubo Penev and Emil Kostadinov, assisting him.

Defending champions Litex Lovech still head the table but are closely followed by Levski Sofia, who beat Slavia in the derby.

The other Levski, from Kjustendil, remain in contention, but CSKA are now out of the reckoning for a European spot.

Last season's Division Two champions, Septemvri, are eight points from safety, and the other promoted clubs, Pirin and Shumen, also are in danger of the drop.

Bob Vaughan

HUNGARY

National team aim to continue the run

IT IS A curious fact that in 16 internationals between Hungary and Romania, going back to 1936, the Magyars have never lost.

Now, the upcoming Euro 2000 qualifier in Romania could make all the difference between Hungary qualifying for the finals, or not.

At the end of March, coach Bertalan Bicskei took his squad to Bratislava for the first official encounter with Slovakia, and kept to the team who had put five past Liechtenstein four days earlier. This time they had to settle for a goalless draw, but at least it kept hopes alive.

More than 9,000 turned up to see the Liechtenstein game, an encouraging sign considering the weakness of the opposition.

In the League, MTK seem certain to be champions for what would be the 21st time, though only the third since 1958. Gyor did well to win away to Ujpest, but that still left them 11 points adrift of MTK, who then widened the gap to 13 with only 10 games left.

Only one point covers the bottom four – Siofok, Kerulet, Videoton and BVSC – with three of them to go down.

Bob Vaughan

CZECH REPUBLIC

Everything's fine for Chovanec

A FIRST WIN in Scotland and full points from the home tie with Lithuania left the Czech Republic sitting pretty at the top of Euro 2000 Group 9, with maximum points from five games.

A sixth win, in the return with the Scots in June, would mean almost certain qualification, although national coach Jozef Chovanec remains cautious. "We have started well, but we must add to those results," he says.

Chovanec's successor at Sparta Prague, Zedenk Scasny, is poised to take the champions to their 24th title. Slavia, Sigma and surprise packet Teplice are still chasing, but have little hope of catching up.

Viktoria Zizkov have a new coach after Jirl Stol became the eighth top-division boss to be sacked this season. Petr Ulicny, once with Viktoria Plzen, now has the job of keeping the team out of the Second Division, and must do it without goalkeeper Jan Stejskal, who broke a bone in a hand at the beginning of a spell on loan from Sparta.

The injury may mean the end of the road for Stejskal, who has won 31 caps.

Bob Vaughan

Away win...the Czechs defeat Scotland

ROMANIA

Piturca has to win – or else!

NATIONAL COACH Victor Piturca is still clinging to his job, but only just. If Hungary are not beaten in the Euro 2000 qualifier on June 5, he will be out.

The warning came from FA president Mircea Sandu, who was far from impressed with the form shown by Piturca's selections against Slovakia then Azerbaijan at the end of March.

The first game, at home, was a scoreless draw. The second, away, was won by Petre Galea's goal early in the second half. Sandu promptly gave Piturca a verbal yellow card, so he and the players now know what is at stake – win or bust.

Anghel Iordanescu, the former national coach, packed in his job in charge of Greece after less than a year. And Mircea Lucescu departed the Italian scene after a brief flirtation with Inter. He took over at Rapid Bucharest, replacing Dumitru Dumitriu, who had quit two weeks earlier.

The title race is between leaders Rapid and another Bucharest outfit, Dinamo, a point behind.

Contrary to the expectations of many, Onesti and Astra of Ploesti are maintaining mid-table positions and seem sure to survive their first season in the top flight.

Bob Vaughan

SLOVAKIA

Title race wide open

INTER, Spartak, Slovan and Kosice are the four teams still in contention for the championship. Inter's defeat by Slovan, on a day when the other two both won, opened up the race, leaving all the first three on 48 points from 21 games. And though Kosice are five points adrift, they may well manage a third consecutive title.

The position at the bottom is much clearer. Bardejov were as good as relegated by the end of April, with Tauris looking the most likely to accompany them.

Two fewer journeys to the east next term will not upset the majority of clubs in the centre and west of a country where money is very tight. Even the FA is in debt, and financial difficulties may mean that *Futbal*, the country's only specialist soccer journal, has to close.

The national team followed up an excellent 0-0 draw in Romania with a disappointing 0-0 result against Hungary in Bratislava, before a crowd of 20,000 and an enormous police presence.

This left Slovakia in fourth place in their Euro 2000 group, but a play-off is not completely out of the question.

Bob Vaughan

UKRAINE

Four coaches out inside a month

WITHIN a month of soccer's restart after the winter break, four coaches had left top-division clubs.

They included Valeriy Yaremchenko, who was in his 10th year as coach of Shakhtar Donetsk. He had produced some excellent teams but was unable to break Kyiv Dynamo's grip on the domestic game. Ironically, Shakhtar, who restarted their programme with a 4-0 win over city rivals Metalurg, were top of the table when Yaremchenko stepped down, as a result of ill health.

He has been succeeded by one of the greatest names in Ukrainian sport – Anatoliy Byshovets, the former Kyiv player and Russian national coach.

"I like Ukrainian football very much, and I've opted for Shakhtar although I had several other offers from clubs in Europe and Asia," said Byshovets.

Shakhtar made a good start under their new chief, beating Metalurg Zaporizha 2-1 at home and Vorskla 2-1 away. They led the table with 46 points from 20 matches, but Kyiv Dynamo were only three points behind with two games in hand.

Miron Markevitch left third-placed Karpaty Lyiv because of the club's financial troubles. He was replaced by former Russian international Stepan Yurchishin, while Markevitch succeeded Olexandr Shtelin at Metalurg Zaporizha.

Shtelin had promised fans that the club would finish "at least in the UEFA Cup zone" but was forced to go when this target proved out of reach.

Ivan Krasnetskiy left the bottom club, SC Mykolaiv, who were promoted last season. Mikhail Kalita is the new man in charge.

Oleg Zadernovsky

ALBANIA

Partizani promised heavy backing

TO BECOME a leading club you need a budget of at least £600,000, says Albanian businessman and Partizani president Albert Xhani.

He has promised to find that sum this year to help his club, says that next year he will double that figure, and after that will double it again.

Xhani does not say how he is going to raise the money, but there is no doubting his enthusiasm. He will not rest until Partizani are back at or above their former level.

At present they are second only to SK Tirana in terms of honours won (15 League titles, 14 Cups) but they have had little success in recent seasons.

Xhani's first big step was to appoint Neptun Bajko as team manager. Bajko is a former technical director of the national squad and has wide experience.

After 22 matches, Partizani were seventh in the 16-club top division – reduced by two from last season. Defending champions Vllaznia Shkoder were top with 44 points, two ahead of SK Tirana and three in front of Bylis Ballshi.

Hopefully, the season's fixtures will be completed as planned, but now more than ever the game in this area is at the mercy of the politicians.

Gezim Nushi

Heading for defeat...England's Paul Scholes puts Poland two down

Wembley woe

Euro 2000 problems on and off the field

POLAND

'TIME OF HUMILIATION', 'Goodbye our illusions' and 'Wojcik – a paper tiger' were just a few of the headlines on the day after the home defeat by Sweden in the Euro 2000 qualifiers. This result came in the wake of another defeat, 3-1 against England at Wembley four days before, and off the field further problems loomed for the Polish campaign as a result of the FA's continuing defiance of FIFA's demand that they hold leadership elections.

Before the two recent games, with Poland leading Group 5 and on a nine-match unbeaten run, coach Janusz Wojcik had been raising hopes of qualification for the finals. "We have enough good players with great confidence in themselves," he had said. But they were undone at Wembley by a Paul Scholes hat-trick, even though captain Jerzy Brzeczek had levelled the scores in the 28th minute after being set up by Miroslaw Trzeciak.

Four days later the Poles lost 1-0 to Sweden at home having played even worse than at Wembley, Fredrik Ljungberg scoring in the 37th minute.

"We must go down to earth and should apologise to our fans," Wojcik said. "We have been trying to go up but have only gone from the football basement to the ground floor." He added that Poland could still finish second in the group. But after the last two games this seems to be far too optimistic.

Such speculation could become academic if the Polish FA refuses to name a date for a leadership election. The deadline for such an announcement had already passed by press time and FIFA has warned that a failure to comply with its demands could result in Poland being expelled from Euro 2000. The situation has stemmed from a clash between the FA's autocratic president, Marian Dziurowicz, and the Sports Minister Jacek Debski. Debski recently threatened to resign if Dziurowicz remains in office.

Dariusz Kurowski

Keeping on scoring

Another 'dual purpose' star arrives, reports Eric Weil

On target again...Jose Luis Chilavert has now scored 40 goals

GOALKEEPERS who score goals as well as stop them are not uncommon in South America. Rene Higuita of Colombia, for one, recently scored his 46th first-class goal. A week later, Jose Luis Chilavert of Paraguay scored his 40th. Jorge Campos of Mexico has played in attack as well as in goal. And now there is news of a much younger example, Nestor Javier Pina, who has appeared in the Uruguayan First Division in midfield as well as between the posts.

Pina is 24, and kept goal for Huracan Buceo last season without causing too much comment. At the beginning of the current campaign, however, he caused a sensation when he appeared in midfield. He did so well that the coach, the oddly-named Beethoven Javier, told him to train with the outfield players but not to cut down on his goalkeeping work. Consequently, Pina's training sessions last twice as long as those of his colleagues.

Buceo have only a small squad, so Pina has been operating in midfield – and scoring some goals – while also filling the breach as reserve goalkeeper. "For the present I prefer playing in midfield because you get more contact with the ball there," he says. "Then there's the matter of mistakes. In midfield you can make a few slips and nobody will blame you. But if you make a major error when you're in goal, you get all the blame, no matter how many saves you might make."

Javier is inclined to persuade Pina to go back into goal full-time because he is more talented in that position and because he runs the risk of being injured when playing outfield, thus leaving the club one short in the goalkeeping department.

Higuita, 32, is now back in Colombia with Independiente Medellin, after a spell in Mexico. His 46th goal was scored from a penalty in a 1-1 draw against Atletico Nacional, the club where he spent most of his career. He has scored all his goals from penalties and free-kicks.

Chilavert, 34, has scored 27 goals in League soccer – he plays in Argentina with Velez Sarsfield – and 13 in other matches, including four in full internationals for Paraguay. The total comprises 32 from penalties, two goals from rebounds after having penalties saved, and six from free-kicks. His 40th goal came in a League match against Independiente, which Velez won 2-0...after Chilavert had stopped one penalty and scored one.

The keeper captained Paraguay in last year's World Cup, but did not achieve his ambition of scoring in the biggest competition of them all. He might get another chance in 2002, though he is currently in dispute with the football authorities. He said he would not play in this year's Copa America in Paraguay when General Lino Oviedo was made head of the organising committee. Now that the general has fled to Argentina, where he has been granted political asylum, the way is clear for Chilavert to return to the fold. However, he says: "When I say something, I keep my word."

Chilavert has strong political convictions and his ultimate ambition is to become his country's president. He also insists that Paraguay should not be hosting the Copa when health services, housing and schooling are more important and in need of money.

He often is referred to as the world's best goalkeeper, and he is none too humble about such accolades. Referring to France 98, he says: "Paraguay got as far as they did because of me."

ARGENTINA

Boca unbeaten in 32

BOCA JUNIORS, who won the 1998-99 opening championship, look a safe bet to win the closing championship as well. They are now unbeaten in 32 League games and closing in on the national record of 39, held by Racing Club since 1965-66.

In their last game before press time, Boca beat Racing 3-0, despite having leading scorer Martin Palermo suspended for pulling his shorts down after scoring in a recent match.

Five points back in second are River Plate, holding up well under the strain of having to play two games a week on average – they have made it into the second round of the Libertadores Cup.

The future of Racing Club continues to hang in the balance. The courts have declared the club bankrupt and it is due to be auctioned, but the judge in charge – a Racing fan – keeps postponing the date. He has to give permission for the team to play games from one week to the next, which does not help morale, and they are near the bottom of the table.

Eric Weil

BRAZIL

First stage goes to Flamengo

FLAMENGO won the first stage of the Rio State Championship – the Guanabara Cup – by beating Vasco da Gama 2-1 on the last day. This puts Flamengo into the Final against the second-stage winners.

Vasco players had been fined for failing to beat lowly Olaria, but got their money back when they beat Fluminense 3-0 in the next match.

Fluminense have sunk into the Third Division of the national championship over the past two years, but now, under former World Cup-winning coach Carlos Alberto Parreira, they seem to be on the way back and finished third in Rio.

Maracana stadium will no longer be the biggest in the world when it reaches its 50th birthday next year. Rio city council is now spending £20million to refurbish it. However, capacity will be reduced to 80,000 – fewer than half the number of fans who watched the Brazil-Uruguay World Cup decider in 1950, the year Maracana was inaugurated.

Recently the stadium has been almost empty for many games, but the Flamengo-Vasco title decider was watched by 126,000 and, earlier, the Flamengo-Fluminense classic had drawn 106,000.

Romario is once more scoring regularly for Flamengo and has been picked for Brazil's national squad again.

Eric Weil

URUGUAY

Passarella finally takes charge

DANIEL PASSARELLA, Argentina's World Cup coach last year, finally agreed to coach Uruguay for the next World Cup after lengthy negotiations.

It is reported he will receive £46,000 a month – part of which is paid by a sponsor – when he takes over after this year's Copa America.

Meanwhile, modest Danubio continue to top the First Division opening championship, and lead Nacional by four points. Penarol, third, have former international striker Carlos Aguilera back. The 35-year-old had been suspended for two years following a positive drug test, but after rehabilitation treatment, he was allowed to return earlier.

Eric Weil

IN BRIEF

IN BOLIVIA, Victor Hugo Antelo became the world's joint top (active) League scorer when he converted his 300th goal for Blooming in their 4-1 victory over Real Santa Cruz. His co-record holder is Austria's Toni Polster.

IN COLOMBIA, America, Junior and Nacional share the lead.

The government's narcotics department now holds a third of the shares in Millonarios, formerly owned by drug trafficker Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha, who was killed by police.

IN CHILE, Universidad de Chile defender Ricardo Rojas is going on trial for allegedly attacking Colo Colo's Marco Villaseca.

Colo Colo's eight-game unbeaten streak was stopped at home by Cobreloa, who took a share of the lead with them.

IN PERU, Sporting Cristal remain unbeaten after 12 games in the opening championship. They lead Universitario by four points.

Alianza Lima are playing all their fixtures away due to a dispute over TV rights for home games.

IN PARAGUAY, Olimpia lead Cerro Porteno by three points after beating them 3-1. But the club's long-serving Uruguayan coach, Luis Cubilla, has gone. During a home Libertadores Cup match, with revolution brewing in the country, the lights went out at half-time, and, thinking an uprising had begun, Cubilla left the stadium to go home. However, the match resumed, Olimpia lost and next day he was fired. Compatriot Miguel Angel Piazza replaced him.

IN VENEZUELA, Argentinian coach Mario Kempes was dismissed by Mineros Guayana. Estudiantes Merida lead by five points.

Eric Weil

New to Uruguay...Daniel Passarella

Pro-files Mauro Galvao & Odvan

Vasco defenders tipped for national team partnership

IF THERE was a World Cup this year, says Brazil coach Wanderley Luxemburgo, then Mauro Galvao would be his first choice centre-back. It is an implicit criticism of Mario Zagallo, who chose not to take the Vasco da Gama captain to France 98 on the grounds that he was too old.

But even at 37, Mauro Galvao (top right) continues to marshal Vasco's rearguard with quality and composure. The key acquisition in the formation of a team that became champions of Brazil and South America, he was the people's choice to organise Brazil's defence of their world title in France last year. "I was very disappointed not to go," he admits, "because I was in top condition. But every coach has his preferences and opinions, and I suppose that the time I spent out of Brazil can't have helped."

Six years with Switzerland's Lugano came at a cost to Galvao's career. "From a personal point of view it was wonderful. My wife and daughter were very happy there. But in professional terms maybe it would have been better if I'd stayed for only three years."

From his early days with Internacional in his native south of Brazil, it was obvious that here was a defender of rare class. A silver medalist at the 1984 Olympics – together with Dunga – Mauro Galvao was in the squad for the 1986 World Cup, though he didn't play. By Italia 90 he was an established part of the team, the sweeper playing behind two marking centre-backs. But Brazil adapted poorly to this new system; after scoring just four goals in as many games, they were bundled out of the competition by Argentina. And off went Mauro Galvao to Switzerland and the international wilderness.

He returned home in 1996 to find that Brazil had stopped producing good centre-backs, a fact that has helped to thrust him once more into international contention. "I may not have the same speed as 10 years ago," he confesses, "but I'm still getting the job done because I've always taken care of myself. And nowadays the physical preparation has improved, the medical care is more scientific and sophisticated, so it's easier to recuperate after games."

Coach Luxemburgo pointedly refused to rule Mauro Galvao out of the next World Cup, when he will be 40. The player is sceptical. "It's very difficult to imagine," he says, "but I'd love to play in the Copa America this year. I'm not obsessed by it, and I'm not anxiously waiting for the phone to ring; but if the call comes, I'm ready."

Mauro Galvao's colleague at the heart of the Vasco defence has even more reason to feel confident of a Copa America call-up. Odvan has been a fixture in Luxemburgo's squads, and was one of the few successes of the recent tour to Asia. It has been a remarkable rise for the giant defender, who was plucked from obscurity by Vasco in 1997. But even as his new club accumulated titles, Odvan was seldom in the limelight. Then, to general amazement, Zico put forward Odvan's claims for a place in the World Cup squad. "I was a bit surprised," admits the defender, "but it's something that you mustn't let go to your head.

"When you go from a small club to a big team it's so important to work on the psychological side of things, and make sure that you maintain your consistency. If you do that at club level there's always a chance of a call-up to the national team."

When Luxemburgo took over, he soon turned to Odvan, describing him as a "centre-back centre-back" – meaning that the basis of his game is kicking the ball away, and then getting in position to kick it away again. The term brings a smile to Odvan's lips. "I try not to mess about," he says. "I play seriously."

His no-nonsense approach has not let him down when playing for Brazil. "I'm up against different styles of play," he confirms. "I face teams who play with more physical strength or who run more than Brazilian sides. You have to adapt to this different rhythm."

Mauro Galvao says of Odvan: "He still has a lot to learn, but he's developing. We've played together for a while, and now you can see I have faith in him. I can bring the ball out of defence confident that I can leave him at the back to take care of things." It is one benefit of a partnership which Luxemburgo could use to form Brazil's defence at the Copa America.

Tim Vickery

Fact files

MAURO Geraldo GALVAO

Club Vasco da Gama
Country Brazil
Born December 9, 1961, in Porto Alegre
Previous clubs Internacional, Bangu, Botafogo, Lugano (Swi), Gremio
International debut April 1986, v Peru
International caps 25
Honours Copa America 1989; Libertadores Cup 1998; Brazilian Championship 1979, 1996, 1997; Brazilian Cup 1997; Swiss Cup 1993; Rio State Championship 1989, 1990, 1998; Rio Grande do Sul Championship 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984; Olympic silver medal 1984.

ODVAN Gomes Silva

Club Vasco da Gama
Country Brazil
Born March 26, 1974, in Campos
Previous clubs Americano, Mineiros, Mimosense
International debut October 1998, v Ecuador
International caps 4
Honours Libertadores Cup 1998; Brazilian Championship 1997; Rio State Championship 1998.

Red faces follow a goals slump

UNITED STATES

TALK ABOUT embarrassment! When just about everybody agrees that what soccer, and the pro game in particular, needs is plenty of goals, Major League Soccer sees its already skimpy goals-per-game average of 2.9 slump to 2.6 in the space of a week.

Suddenly the League is infested with a rash of low-scoring draws, which makes the whole thing doubly embarrassing. Because this is a League which has declared war on draws – it simply won't have them – and there has to be a winner. So each of those draws has to be decided using the MLS shoot-out, in which the shooter starts from 35 yards out, one-on-one with the goalkeeper, both players moving as much as they like, and the shooter has five seconds to get off his shot.

Fifty per cent of the time, the shooter makes a hash of it, the goalkeeper gets in the way of his shot ('saves' is much too exaggerated a description) and the ball does not go in the net.

Television plays a role here – possibly a double role. MLS games on TV are allotted a two-hour slot, so there's no time for any extra time. If the game is drawn after 90 minutes, it goes straight into the shoot-out. There is also the feeling that TV people like the shoot-out, because it makes 'highlights' easier to select.

MLS commissioner Doug Logan maintains that the shoot-out is fine and dandy, and that the fans like it. Evidence? Well, they cheer while it's going on. Right, fans usually do want their team to win, however silly the means of obtaining that win may be.

Surveys conducted over the Internet, however, have suggested that the fans do *not* like the shoot-out. Banners have been seen in at least two stadiums calling for its banishment.

Logan has now started to back-track, admitting that he can see the day when the shoot-out will no longer be needed. But it won't be this season. We're stuck with it. Which raises the question: why do we need it anyway?

Two reasons are commonly cited. One is the much talked-about but never proved assertion that Americans won't accept draws – usually accompanied by the famous quote, from some American football coach, that a draw is like kissing your sister. The other is that the shoot-out is supposed to stop teams deliberately playing defensively.

Defensive soccer, during most of the three-year life of MLS, has not been a problem. But it assumed importance at the end of last season when Chicago Fire took it upon themselves to win the championship by playing decidedly defensive, tight-marking soccer.

It begins to look as though that message has been received by the other coaches. The open, attacking play of the heady young days of the League has been replaced by low-scoring draws and shoot-outs.

Not to worry, said Logan, this is just an aberration. Trying to justify the 2.9 goals-per-game average, he quite correctly pointed out that the MLS average was a highly respectable 3.6 last year – and had never before been below 3.0. Just wait, seemed to be his message.

Yet in the following week there were six games, only 10 goals were scored, and four of the games ended in shoot-outs. The average dipped to 2.6. Fifteen shoot-outs in 27 games. No doubt the frequency will fall, but Logan and MLS cannot afford to ignore an ominous warning.

In its first year, all foreign stars were acquired by the League and assigned to the clubs. Most of the selection was done by then deputy commissioner Sunil Gulati, and he went after creative attacking players. As the League has grown, the club coaches have assumed more responsibility for the selection of players (though it is still the League that signs them). Clearly this has meant a swing towards more conservative soccer.

The New York-New Jersey MetroStars are a sad case in point. New coach Bora Milutinovic has brought to the team his well-known brand of no-risk soccer. They made their best start to a season, with three wins and one defeat. However, the truth behind the figures was less appetising. Two of the wins were via the shoot-out, and the team scored only four goals.

New England Revolution's player-coach Walter Zenga has also been emphasising defensive play. But the team's poor record of one win and three defeats is open to another interpretation. All the defeats came in shoot-outs, enabling Zenga to declare proudly that, so far, they had not been beaten in 90 minutes.

Paul Gardner

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Champion feeling...Brazil's Corinthians celebrate victory over Tottenham in the Under-19 Super Group Final

Still among the best there is

Paul Gardner reports on the Dallas Cup

THE DALLAS CUP celebrated its 20th birthday with another all-star line-up that showed, once again, why it is among the best youth tournaments in the world. This is not a matter of size. The tournament featured 164 teams, not that many when compared with some of the major European youth festivals.

Goal fever...for Santos Under-14s

Rather it is the truly global span of the competition that is so impressive. The 21 foreign countries represented this year included Japan, China, South Africa, Israel, Brazil, Argentina, England, Romania, Canada and Jamaica – and a team of 14-year-olds from Yugoslavia, who wavered between staying and going home as the Kosovo crisis developed. The boys were given a standing ovation during the opening ceremony for their decision to stay and play.

While the Super Group, for Under-19 players, featured its usual share of top clubs, including Tottenham, Deportivo Cali, Corinthians, Twente Enschede and UNAM Pumas, there was an attempt on the part of organiser Bill Stroube to persuade the pro clubs to enter teams in the younger age groups. The move follows the success last year of Manchester United's boys, who took the Under-12 title, and attracted nearly 5,000 fans to the Final.

England responded to the overtures, with West Ham (Under-16), Everton (Under-14), and, again, Manchester United (Under-12) all sending teams. None turned out to be winners, even though the Dallas weather seemed determined to make them feel at home, with a week of on-and-off drizzle and almost relentlessly grey skies.

Despite high expectations, the Manchester United boys could not repeat their victory of last year. They even got an unexpected gift in the opening seconds of their game against Houstonians. As a cross went into the Houstonians penalty area, their left-back suddenly took off in a perfect goalkeeper's dive to parry the ball away. Penalty, and a very quick 1-0 advantage to Man U. The Houstonians coach explained later: "The kid is really a goalkeeper, but we had to use him as a full-back. He got confused."

But Houstonians came back with three goals, and Man U, who had already lost their first game to another American team, failed to advance to the knockout stage.

Another English squad, Royal Navy, have played in 19 of the tournaments, but may be calling it a day. On their first appearance, in 1981, the club took the Under-19 division, but such has been the increase in the calibre of the opposition, that they now have difficulty in winning any games, never mind advancing.

Surprisingly, Tottenham turned out to be the most successful of the English entries. Though they never looked convincing, they won when it mattered. Typical was their 2-1 semi-final defeat of Pumas. Virtually all the soccer came from the Mexicans, but the crucial goals came from Spurs. Chief scorer was their extraordinary centre-forward, Peter Crouch, who used his 6ft 5in to head goals against Pumas and Deportivo Cali, though he also got the winner against the latter by rounding off a dribble with a beautifully angled shot.

Spurs' winning touch disappeared in the Final, when Brazil's Corinthians, playing without their two suspended stars, Sergio and Luciano, outplayed the London side to record a 3-0 victory.

Brazil also showed their strength at the Under-14 level. The destination of the title never really looked in doubt from the very first game. Pele's club, Santos, put on a series of exhibitions, outscoring their opponents 21-0 on aggregate in their three first-round games. In charge of the team was Pele's long-time associate Julio Mazzei. Asked about the team's brilliant young star – inevitably, he was wearing Pele's old No 10, but carried the decidedly Argentinian name of Diego – Mazzei spread his arms to embrace the whole team: "They are all good players, but no, no, none of them is another Pele."

Although Brazil captured two titles, they were not the most successful country in the tournament. That honour went to Mexico, with Monterrey winning the Under-16 group, UNAM Pumas the Under-17s, and Atlas beating Guadalajara 2-1 in an all-Mexican Under-19 Final.

The Americans had a rare win, with the local Dallas Texans taking the Under-12 title, the first time that a Dallas team had won a group since 1994.

DALLAS CUP XX - 1999 FINALS

Under-12 Division
DALLAS TEXANS (USA) 2
Houstonians (USA) 1

Under-14 Division
SANTOS (Bra) 4
Sockers FC (USA) 2

Under-16 Division
CF MONTERREY (Mex) 2
FC Delco (USA) 1

Under-17 Division
UNAM PUMAS (Mex) 1
Claremont Stars (USA) 0

Under-19 Division
ATLAS FC (Mex) 3
CD Guadalajara (Mex) 1

Under-19 Super Group
SC CORINTHIANS (Bra) 3
Tottenham Hotspur (Eng) 0

Tunisians first to the finals

Mark Gleeson reports on the latest Nations Cup qualifiers

TUNISIA became the first country to secure qualification from the preliminaries of the African Nations Cup as they kept up their 100 per cent record with a 2-0 win in Uganda.

The Tunisians will fill one of the two qualifying spots available from Group 7 and need one point from their remaining two games to ensure they win the group.

They are now the fourth team in the 16-nation finals, along with holders Egypt and the new co-hosts, Ghana and Nigeria. The removal of Ghana and Nigeria from the qualifying process has made things easier for Cameroon and Burkina Faso in their respective groups and both need only a point to secure their places.

Also highly fancied to make it are Zambia, whose win over Kenya was a third successive triumph in the qualifiers, and Morocco, who could have qualified if they had beaten Togo at home but can still make sure with a draw against Guinea in their next outing.

Defeat for South Africa in Gabon has thrown open Group 4, while there are still a few other tussles waiting in the wings before all the finalists are known.

Here is a group-by-group review of the latest round of qualifiers and the countries' prospects:

GROUP 1: Cameroon started the campaign in typically limp style but, as usual, came good just in time. Their 6-1 win in Mozambique was extraordinary, however, with four goals in the first half shared between Joseph-Desire Job and Cagliari's Patrick Mboma. The match marked the return of Marc-Vivien Foe, the West Ham midfielder who had not played for his country since breaking a leg on the eve of last year's World Cup finals.

Cameroon should beat Eritrea to make sure of the automatic qualifying berth, leaving the Eritrea-Mozambique game in Asmara on June 19 to determine who finishes as runners-up and goes through to the special play-off group that CAF has created to accommodate the late inclusion of Zimbabwe, deposed as host nation, into the preliminaries. That will start in July and be played on a league basis.

GROUP 2: Victory for Morocco in Casablanca against minnows Togo would have secured a place in the finals but, despite taking an early lead through Youssef Chippo, they let it slip and France-based Djima Oyawole, once of Metz, equalised.

Morocco can still finish top with victory over Guinea at the same venue on June 5. The final game in the group is in Conakry, where Guinea will need to beat Togo with some conviction to take the runners-up berth and the other qualification spot.

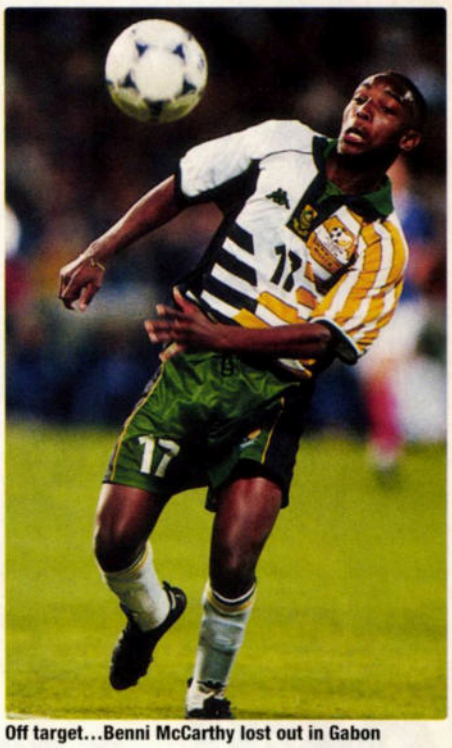
GROUP 3: Ivory Coast are back on top of the table, having beaten previous leaders Congo 2-0 in Abidjan. Their goals came from Ibrahima Bakayoko, finding the touch that has deserted him at Everton, and Joel Tiehi, now seeing out his final playing days in the Gulf.

The group is still far from settled, though, after Mali gained their first victory with a late winner from Mamadou Yaya Dissa against Namibia in Bamako. The smart money remains on the Ivorians and Congo, who have not been at the finals since 1992.

GROUP 4: There were all sorts of fire and brimstone from an aggrieved South Africa after Dieudonne Londo's injury-time penalty gave Gabon a 1-0 victory in Libreville. Congolese referee Joseph Mandzioukouta was, admittedly, shocking but Benni McCarthy's failure in front of goal really cost Bafana Bafana. The win revived Gabon's chances of qualifying considerably, although South Africa still lead the group.

Surprise team Mauritius were held 1-1 by Angola in Curepipe but could yet qualify. Captain Bodunha gave Mauritius the lead but Germany-based striker Christopher Perle equalised. Angola are not out of it, either, but must beat Gabon in Libreville on June 6 to stay in the race.

GROUP 5: One more point for Burkina Faso would see them through after an easy 3-1 win over Burundi in Ouagadougou. The goals came from David Opango, who put into his own net on his full international debut, Mamadou Zongo and Boureima Zongo. Burundi now face Senegal in Dakar for the runners-up berth, which would take them through to the special play-off group with Zimbabwe and the Group 1 runners-up.



Off target...Benni McCarthy lost out in Gabon

GROUP 6: Frazier Kamwand's goal was enough to give Zambia a 1-0 win over Kenya and push them to within a point of qualifying yet again. A win against Madagascar in Lusaka on June 5 will be enough for them to clinch the group, leaving DR Congo likely to pick up second place if they beat Kenya in Nairobi.

The Congolese, finally getting to use more of their players based abroad thanks to a bigger budget available to coach Louis Watunda, beat Madagascar 2-0 in Kinshasa, with ex-captain Epangala Lokose scoring a rare goal.

GROUP 7: George Weah flew in and out of Algiers to play for Liberia and still got back in time to help Milan's *scudetto* cause. It was all in vain, though, as Algeria won 4-1 to move into second place behind Tunisia. Rafik Saifi, the new toast of Algerian football, was among the scorers.

Weah's dream of a final Nations Cup appearance is looking a little remote. The Lone Stars now have to win in Kampala against Uganda, who suffered a third successive defeat when the Tunisians beat them 2-0 through Hassan Gabsi and a Faouzi Rouissi penalty.

The ASEC kids start to struggle

THERE was a little sweat and panic at ASEC Abidjan before the reigning African club champions overcame Gabon's FC105 Libreville to reach the second round of this year's competition.

ASEC had to come from a goal down in the first leg to shuffle past the military team and had to wait for a Siaka Tiene goal seven minutes from time to give them a 3-1 win in the second leg and a 3-2 triumph on aggregate.

ASEC's new teenage brigade, almost brazenly promoted into the first team from the junior teams by new coach Jean-Marc Guillou, were marvellous in winning the African Super Cup against the odds in February, but it looks as if the Champions League campaign is going to be different. They still have to get past the second round to qualify for the lucrative league and cannot fancy the prospect of Algeria's El Harrach, their next opponents.

Algerian soccer has been at something of a low ebb but Harrach did something to lift it with a 6-0 thumping of USFA of Burkina Faso in the first round, second leg. It overturned a 2-0 first leg deficit and warned the youthful Ivorians that they could face a humiliatingly early exit.

There are certainly a number of strong pretenders to the throne, with Al Ahly of Egypt, Esperance of Tunisia, Morocco's Raja Casablanca and Mamelodi Sundowns of South Africa among them.

Al Ahly would be most people's favourites with their star-studded line-up, not least the goalscoring exploits of Hossam Hassan, whose first leg hat-trick against Maji Maji of Tanzania and another goal in the return helped his team to a 5-0 win on aggregate.

Esperance scored twice in the opening 11 minutes of the second leg against Al Mahala of Libya to go through 4-1 on aggregate.

Raja Casablanca were a goal down to ASC Ndiambour of Senegal going into the second leg but won 4-0 at home with Moroccan international Mohamed Moustaouda claiming all the goals.

Sundowns won both home and away against Telcom Wanderers of Malawi, and should be too strong for Reunion's Saint-Louisienne in the next round. But by the time the league phase comes around they might well have lost their two trump cards – Romania-born coach Ted Dumitru and Nigeria striker Raphael Chukwu, who is being chased by MSV Duisburg of the Bundesliga.

In the Cup-winners Cup, the street kids of Matare United are through to the second round, where they now meet Dragons of DR Congo.

Matare United's fairytale rise from a club formed to take children off the streets of Nairobi to a newly-promoted team this season in Kenya's top league will continue to be a major focus of the competition.

Mark Gleeson

Butler moves to Botswana

SOUTHERN AFRICA

MUCH-TRAVELLED English coach Jeff Butler is the new national coach of **BOTSWANA** after a successful decade in South Africa, where he won League titles with Kaizer Chiefs and Mamelodi Sundowns. He was previously national team coach in Zambia and South Africa and won the African Champions Cup with Egypt's Al Ahly in 1987.

The title race in **SOUTH AFRICA** has turned into a two-team show, with defending champions Mamelodi Sundowns and Kaizer Chiefs neck-and-neck in the final straight. Chiefs have 63 points, three ahead of Sundowns, who have a game in hand. Chiefs are seeking a treble, having already won the Rothmans Cup and reached the semi-finals of the BoB Save Super Bowl. Three-times South African Footballer of the Year Mark Maponyane has retired after 17 seasons to become a television pundit.

Ajax have taken two of **ZAMBIA's** Under-20 internationals – striker Emmanuel Zulu and defensive midfielder Andrew Sinkala – on trial.

Dynamos are headed for a third successive title in **ZIMBABWE**, having opened a five-point lead over Highlanders. Zimbabwe international Methembe Ndlovu has moved to Boston Bulldogs in the United States. Former Zambia captain Jones Chilengi has died in Zimbabwe, where he was coaching Hwange. His death follows that of Benjamin Nkonjera, occasional captain of Zimbabwe, who died in Bulawayo after a short illness.

CENTRAL AFRICA

VETERAN **CAMEROON** striker Francois Omam Biyik, scorer of the opening goal at the 1990 World Cup, is back in Mexico with Puebla after a brief sojourn with Sampdoria.

Former Cameroon World Cup defender Emmanuel Kunde has taken a coaching job in **GABON** with US Bitam.

EAST AFRICA

MAURITIUS will play Aston Villa in a warm-up match for their African Nations Cup qualifier against South Africa in Johannesburg. Villa will pay a brief visit to the island after the end of the English season.

NORTH AFRICA

EGYPT, All-Africa Games gold medallists four years ago in Harare, will not be in Johannesburg in September to defend their title. They were surprisingly beaten by Eritrea on penalties after their two-legged preliminary round tie ended goalless. Eritrea now meet Uganda to decide who qualifies from North and East Africa.

German coach Frank Engels has been sacked by Egyptian club Ismailia after a clash with the directors.

Rafik Saifi, Mouloudia Alger's **ALGERIA** international, has attracted bids from Lens and Marseille.

Veteran **TUNISIA** international Ziad Tlemcani has retired. Tlemcani, who played in Portugal and Japan before returning home to help Esperance win the African Cup-winners Cup, will now take over as sporting director at the Tunis club.

German coach Eckhard Krautzen has left CS Sfaxien, last year's CAF Cup winners, and is replaced by Brazilian Dos Santos, a former Kenya national team coach who guided Etoile Sahel to the African Cup-winners Cup two years ago.

WEST AFRICA

FORMER African Footballer of the Year Victor Ikpeba and FC Zurich goalkeeper Ike Shoronmu are the latest **NIGERIA** players to retire from international football in a fit of pique after failing to make the starting line-up. Sunday Oliseh and Daniel Amokachi quit after the World Cup Finals last year but have since returned for the African Nations Cup qualifiers. Nigerian FA chairman Abdulmumini Aminu says they will not beg any player to play for the national team again.

Pape Malick Diop, now with Strasbourg, has been named **SENEGAL's** Footballer of the Year.

Mark Gleeson

No to Nigeria...Victor Ikpeba

Pro-file Adil Ramzi

On a learning curve in Holland

NO AGENT worth his salt these days misses the bi-annual African junior championship. In recent years there have been some rich pickings for the clubs of Europe with some incredible talent on offer – including Moroccan attacking midfielder Adil Ramzi.

He was much sought after as he captained the Moroccan team who won the 1997 African championship on home soil and then went on to be one of the African representatives in the world Under-20 championship in Malaysia later that year.

It was there that he thought he had secured the move of his dreams when Paris Saint-Germain came calling, but when he got home he found his club, Kawkab Marrakesh, had sold him to Udinese instead.

"I dreamt all my life of becoming a professional footballer, but I was not happy when I signed for Udinese," he says. "I really wanted to go to Paris, but my club wanted me to be the first Moroccan in Serie A. For every player Serie A is a dream, but for me it was not a free choice." Ramzi's concerns were confirmed when he became part of an overburdened squad, which included several other young Africans all trying to break into the first team. "I was well treated at Udinese and you won't hear me say a bad thing about them. But I wasn't happy and maybe it showed in my play."

Ramzi played just one game, against Lecce in September 1997, and was more than willing to go on loan to the undistinguished Willem II in Holland, a team of which he had, not surprisingly, never heard.

"It wasn't easy, but I have the freedom to play behind the strikers and have been really happy," he said. With good reason, too, for Ramzi has scored nine times for the Tilburg club this season, including two in the UEFA Cup, and attracted the attention of Moroccan team coach Henri Michel.

He scored on his international debut, the December friendly against Bulgaria in Agadir, and said: "I couldn't go on to the streets afterwards because of people wanting my autograph." It was a classic case of the home boy reaching the top for the local Kawkab fans – Ramzi started playing for the club at the tender age of eight.

He played the second half of January's friendly against France and also appeared in the African Nations Cup qualifiers against Guinea and Togo, as Morocco have closed in on a place in next year's finals.

Willem II have been negotiating for months to convert Ramzi's loan deal into a permanent move, although PSV Eindhoven are now showing a healthy interest.

Either way, the 21-year-old says: "I want to stay in Holland for now but my aim is to go to a top club in Spain or Italy. To achieve that I have to be in a good learning school, and that is the Dutch League."

With that kind of attitude, Ramzi is one youngster with a bright future.

Mark Gleeson

Fact file

Club Willem II (Hol)
Country Morocco
Born July 14, 1977, in Marrakesh
Previous clubs Kawkab Marrakesh, Udinese (Ita)
International debut December 1998, v Bulgaria
International caps 4 (1 goal)
Honours African Under-20 Championship 1997

ASIAN CUP-WINNERS CUP

Al Ittihad triumph in extra time

SAUDI ARABIA's Al Ittihad won a controversial and action-packed Asian Cup-winners Cup Final in Tokyo, beating South Korea's Chunnam Dragons 3-2 after scoring a golden goal in extra time.

They are the third Saudi team to win the title in successive years, following Al Hilal and Al Nasr.

Al Ittihad coach Davidovic Dimitrije said: "My team made a fantastic effort. This is our third cup win of the season, after the Federation Cup and the Gulf Cup. We have won more than 90 per cent of our games during the past eight months, and this is our best season ever."

Chunnam had terrible luck. Apart from having to play without key midfielder Lim Kwan-sik, who had been booked twice earlier in the tournament, they had goalkeeper Park Jong-mun injured in the second minute, in a collision with English forward Dalian Atkinson, and conceded a penalty for accidental handling in the ninth minute.

Ahmed Bahja scored from the spot, but Chunnam soon equalised through Roh Sang-rea. Then they had Maciel Luiz Franco sent off for a late tackle, and deputy keeper Park Chul-woo had to go off with an ankle injury.

Jou Yeong-ho became the third keeper – "because he's the tallest", according to coach Lee Hoi-taek – and Chunnam's 10 men fought with such spirit that they went ahead after 70 minutes, from a penalty by Roh.

Al Ittihad kept pressing, however, and Mohammed Hawsawi thundered in an equaliser in the 84th minute. So the match went to sudden-death extra time, and after 15 minutes the deciding goal arrived – from yet another penalty.

Even then Jou managed to save the first shot, but Ahmed Bahja scored from the rebound.

Mike Plastow

Taking the prize...Al Ittihad carry off the Asian Cup-winners Cup

ASIA IN BRIEF

ARAB CLUB SUPER CUP: Algeria's Mouloudia Oran proved too much for hosts Al Jaish of Syria, as they claimed the trophy for the first time with a 3-1 win.

The competition, played on a round robin basis, involves the finalists of both the Arab Club Championship and Arab Cup-winners Cup. Al Jaish started their campaign on a bright note, beating the other Algerian side, Wadad Tlemcen, 1-0 and Saudi Arabia's Al Shabab 2-0, before falling at the last hurdle to the eventual winners. They finished just one point behind Mouloudia Oran, who defeated Al Shabab 1-0 and were held to a goalless draw by Wadad Tlemcen.

LEBANON: Safa put together five consecutive wins to topple the early pace-setters and hot favourites Ansar from the head of the table with just four games to go. Safa went top for the first time in four years after beating Homenetmen while Ansar were slipping to a rare defeat, going down 1-0 to their arch rivals Nejmeh.

SYRIA: Defending champions Al Jaish of Damascus and Al Karama of Homs are joint top of the table with 48 points apiece after round 23, following Jaish's 4-1 demolition of relegation-bound Al Jihad, and Karama's 2-1 victory over Teshrin.

JAPAN

Kashima crash as kids come good

A CURIOUS month of self-doubt and high expectations in Japanese football was capped by the day when sports editors had to deal with both the Under-20 team's win over Portugal at the World Youth Cup in Nigeria and Kashima Antlers' crushing 4-1 Asian Cup-winners Cup semi-final defeat by Chunnam Dragons in Tokyo.

Only a couple of days after Kashima's humiliation, the youth squad cruised past Mexico into their first World Youth Cup semi-final.

At first, nobody was feeling the heat more than national team manager Philippe Troussier, who had a run-in with the JFA over the selection for Nigeria.

Troussier, faced by injuries to key players such as Daisuke Ichikawa and Junichi Inamoto, wanted to bring in some newcomers. The JFA refused because there was no time for inoculations.

The manager then demanded to know how he could be expected to win without the players he wanted; the JFA raised the stakes, announcing that after two Under-20 quarter-final appearances in a row, the target now was the semis. Few thought Japan would get there after losing twice to South Korea in the Asian qualifiers.

While all this was going on, Troussier also had to lead the full national team in a home friendly against Brazil, who were fresh from their shock 1-0 defeat by South Korea and in no mood to repeat their mistakes.

Goals from Amoroso and Emerson gave Brazil a 2-0 victory, a result that was greeted with ferocious booing from the crowd and many hard words in the press.

Troussier was all smiles and appeasement. "The score shows the gap that exists between Japan and Brazil," he said. "But I was content that my team combined well, was compact, had a good presence on the pitch, was intelligent and looked hard for goals. The problems were mainly in the details, and small mistakes count for a lot in football."

Defeat by Cameroon in the opening game of the World Youth Cup made it look as if Troussier's days were numbered. But the team improved as the tournament progressed, and in the end exceeded everyone's expectations.

Again, however, that South Korean yardstick came back to haunt the Japanese, in the form of Chunnam's demolition of Kashima. The winners of the next Asian Super Cup (between the Cup-winners Cup and Club Championship winners) stand to go to the first World Club Cup. Japan were determined to be there and went out of their way to host the semi-finals and Final of the Cup-winners Cup.

Kashima's winning streak in J.League games had ended at 16 with defeat by Verdy Kawasaki, the previous record-holders at 15, and they had been taken to extra time by Kyoto Purple Sanga the previous weekend. Even so, confidence was high.

On the day, however, Antlers were simply overwhelmed by Chunnam's speed and power and, despite taking an early lead, ended up conceding four.

The Japanese side might have done better if the injured Bismarck had been present in midfield, but they were utterly outplayed. The 1-0 win over Talaba of Iraq two days later to clinch third place, in a near-deserted National stadium, provided little consolation.

Manager Ze Mario said: "The biggest thing we've learned from these two games is the roughness of international competition. Football is very pretty in Japan, but here we met a different dimension. Our players must learn to use their ability even when the opposition are playing right on the edge of fouling."

Fans pelted the Antlers with paper cups and anything else that came to hand after the Chunnam game.

Happily for Japanese football, the youth team came to the rescue. Thanks to their exploits in Nigeria, the disgrace in Tokyo did not get the attention it might have had.

Tanaka quits Grampus

THE J.LEAGUE'S first managerial casualty of the season was Koji Tanaka of Nagoya Grampus Eight. Great things had been expected of Grampus after their big close-season signings but nothing quite went right from the start, with early defeats to Gamba Osaka and Sanfrecce Hiroshima (after Dragan Stojkovic was again sent off) and a draw with struggling JEF United Ichihara.

Things came to a head two hours before the match with Verdy, when Tanaka sent home three star players – captain Go Oiwa and national team members Takashi Hirano and Shigeyoshi Mochizuki. That game ended in a 2-1 defeat and Tanaka resigned. He has been replaced by head coach Daniel Sanchez, who has given the captaincy to ex-Yokohama Flugels skipper Motohiro Yamaguchi.

Sanchez won his first game in charge, 3-1 against Bellmare Hiratsuka, with both Mochizuki and Hirano scoring.

● JAWOC, the Japan Organising Committee for the 2002 World Cup, more than doubled its staff to nearly 100 from April 1. Meanwhile, South Korea urged Japan to move ahead with plans for the emperor to make his first state visit to South Korea. South Korean President Kim Dae-jung linked this with co-hosting when he met Ichiro Ozawa, the leader of Japan's Liberal Party. "The emperor's visit to our country and the successful joint hosting of the 2002 World Cup are two important events for deepening friendship," he said.

Mike Plastow & Michi Ishijima

OMAN: With only one round to go, Dhofar clinched the League title for a record seventh time, despite being held to a scoreless draw away to fourth-placed Sour.
YEMEN: Al Ahly Sana'a opened a six-point gap on their main title challengers, Sha'ab Ibb, following their away win over third-placed Al Wahda Sana'a.
IRAN: For the first time a Saudi referee has officiated the Tehran derby between current leaders Esteghlal and Persepolis. The game ended in a 1-1 draw before a 120,000 crowd at the Azadi stadium. Abdulrahman Al-Zaid proved to be a commanding figure, showing the red card to three players.

Persepolis still lead the table after round 22 with 51 points, 12 points ahead of Sepahan Isfahan.

Mohamed Chbaro

OLYMPIC QUALIFIERS: Uzbekistan kicked off the Olympic qualifiers with a 3-1 win over Kyrgyzstan at home in Tashkent. In another Central Asia Group 5 match, Turkmenistan beat Tajikistan 2-1. The Asian qualifying round has nine groups involving 30 teams.
HONG KONG: Three internationals – Kevin Lok Kar-win, Chan Chi-keung and Wai Kwan-lung – recently were jailed for 22 months and fined £2,430 each for handling proceeds from a match-fixing incident. Subsequently, the men were handed a lifetime ban from the game.

They were accused of conspiring with another player, Chan Tsz Kong, to win bets by ensuring that Hong Kong were beaten by Thailand in a World Cup qualifier in 1997. Hong Kong lost 2-0. Last July, Chan was sentenced to a year in jail and his case has been referred to FIFA with a recommendation for a world ban.

Azam Mahmood

INDIA: A 5-0 thrashing of National League champions Goa in the Santosh Trophy Final was Bengal's sixth successive victory in the event. It was also their 29th win in 39 appearances in the Final, and Goa's worst defeat in the competition, which began in 1941. The goals came from Basudeb Mondal, Baichung Bhutia, Carlton Chapman, Raman Vijayan and Dipendu Biswas.

A total of 29 states took part, with Bengal beating Kerala 3-1 in one semi-final and Goa defeating Tamilnadu by the same score in the other.

G C Das

CHINA

Dalian run ends at 57

THE FIFTH Chinese professional championship began with a sensation. Newly-promoted Liaoning won 1-0 at Dalian, champions in three of the four previous seasons and unbeaten in 57 consecutive home games, stretching back to the pre-professional days.

This time Qu Shengqing's 49th-minute goal proved too much for them – and the poor start continued as Dalian failed to win their next three games. Coach Xu Genbao has been given an ultimatum – unless there is a recovery in the next six matches, he will be out.

One coach already has gone. Hu Zhigang, who took Shenzen from the Third Division to the First in two years before joining Wuhan, was dismissed after his new charges took only one point from their first four matches.

Liaoning, back in the top flight after three years, grew in confidence from their opening victory, and were top of the table after four matches, with 10 points.

Slobodan Santrac, who coached Yugoslavia in last year's World Cup, had a mixed start with Shandong. They began by beating Qingdao for the first time since 1994, but then lost 3-2 at home to Songri after being two up with 20 minutes left.

Zheng Ming

WORLD CUP 2002

AFC appeals for more places

PETER VELAPPAN, the Asian confederation's chief executive, has appealed to Europe and South America to show understanding and solidarity towards Asia, in a bid to end the current row with FIFA over places for the 2002 World Cup in Japan/South Korea.

Asian FAs have threatened a boycott of the qualifying tournament after FIFA decided to award Asia only four places – including two for the co-hosts.

In France, Asia had three places plus the chance of a fourth via a play-off against the Oceania champions but the play-off spot for 2002 will be awarded to the fifth-placed South American team, and the AFC is demanding that FIFA returns it to Asia.

Velappan, also FIFA co-ordinator for the 2002 World Cup, said: "FIFA president Sepp Blatter feels that Asia deserves a fifth spot. We remain very optimistic that we will have a little more than we have now."

The AFC has made a renewed effort to combat growing bribery and corruption in Asian football. To chart its anti-corruption strategy it will host a two-day seminar in Singapore to be attended by officials of the severely-afflicted FAs of Brunei, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Velappan said: "If left unchecked, bribery and corruption will totally destroy all efforts of the national FAs to develop football. It is important, therefore, to remain vigilant with regards to this problem, and ensure measures are taken to combat it."

Azam Mahmood

OCEANIA IN BRIEF

United join race for the title

THE CHASE for **AUSTRALIA'S** Ericsson Cup Minor Premiership has turned into a two-club affair now that Sydney United have hit a hot streak of form, despite chronic financial problems.

They have closed the gap on South Melbourne, who have set the pace for almost the whole season.

West Adelaide and Gippsland Falcons also report heavy debts, and even the ruling body, Soccer Australia, is deeply in the red.

The silver lining to the economic cloud comes in the form of the 14,000 home attendances for boom clubs Perth Glory and Northern Spirit.

Their battle for the title of best-supported club is almost as absorbing as the dogfight at the top of the table.

In **NEW ZEALAND**, Central United consolidated their lead in the North Island League with a 6-1 win over second-placed Lower Hutt City, thanks mainly to a hat-trick from veteran Fred De Jong.

Unbeaten United now have a five-point lead over City, and the most obvious threat to their title hopes is the national team's seven-week preparation for the Confederations Cup, when several of their players will be needed.

In **FIJI**, National League title-holders Nadi lead by six points from The Blacks, with Suva 11 further points back in third place.

Paul Moon

NEXT MONTH

EUROPE'S MOST WANTED

The summer's top transfers – before they happen

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Frank Rijkaard on his plans for the Dutch national side

PLUS The full story from Barcelona on the Champions League Final

STAY AHEAD OF THE GAME WITH WORLD SOCCER

JULY ISSUE ON SALE JUNE 2

Crossword

Mitre

Win a Mitre Ultimax Fluo Flare – official match ball of the FA

Mitre has kindly donated an Ultimax Fluo Flare, the official match ball of the English Football Association, as first prize for this month's crossword. The first correct entry selected at random after June 4 will win the ball. Five runners-up will each win a copy of the book *Football Moods*, a photographic essay of the game. SEND YOUR ENTRY TO: JUNE CROSSWORD, *World Soccer*, King's Reach Tower, Stamford St, London SE1 9LS.

CLUES ACROSS

1 MSV Duisburg's Senegalese front man, on loan from Lillestrom (6)
3 Olympiakos striker first capped by Yugoslavia last year (4)
7 Madrid-bound midfielder of Liverpool and England (9)
9 Senegalese forward in France with Le Havre (4)
10 Parma's Croatian midfield man, formerly with Club Brugge (6)
12 Teenage Finnish international whose form for Haka attracted Auxerre (6)
13 Venezia Brazilian who earlier this season scored a controversial goal against Bari (4)
16 Ex-Rangers and England midfielder now at Middlesbrough (9)
17 Tottenham full-back who represents the Republic of Ireland (4)
18 Former French international who quit this season as Monaco coach (6)

CLUES DOWN

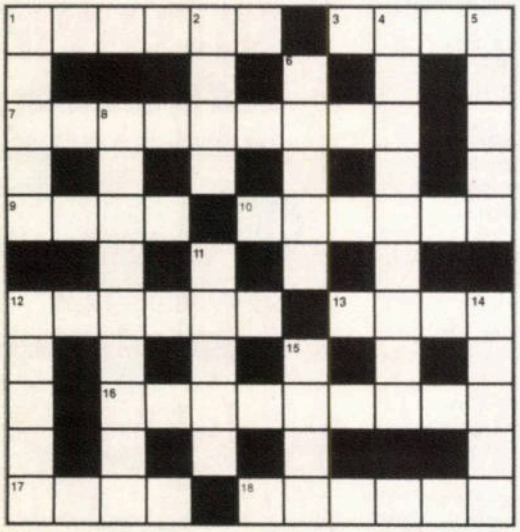
1 Brazilian appointed last year as Gabon's national coach (5)
2 1998 French League champions (4)
4 Munich 1860's veteran Dutch libero, originally with Ajax (9)
5 Macedonian striker whose club sides have included Aarau and now Nurnberg (5)
6 One-time Rangers manager now in charge at Everton (5)
8 Austrian goalkeeper serving as Seaman's understudy at Arsenal (9)
11 Zambia's German coach during the 1998 African Nations Cup finals (5)
12 Ex-Partizan Belgrade midfielder now in Serie A with Roma (5)
14 Coach who left DC United to run the US national team (5)
15 Espanyol keeper first capped by Spain in 1998 (4)

MAY SOLUTION

ACROSS: 7 Riedl, 8 Hadji, 9 Edilson, 10 Seo, 11 Zoff, 13 Diao, 17 Foe, 18 Udinese, 20 Linke, 21 Loose.
DOWN: 1 Preetz, 2 Hegi, 3 Slask, 4 China, 5 Edusei, 6 Kiko, 12 Freund, 14 Ouedec, 15 Suker, 16 Pirlo, 17 Fall, 19 Eloi.

APRIL WINNERS

1st prize: Amanda Kift, Cardiff.
Runners-up: Jean Paul Camille, Seychelles; Graham Caldwell, Renfrewshire; Christian Peters, Loeningen, Germany; Pat Howell, Mosgiel, New Zealand; Mr M Doward, Carms, Wales.



NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

JUNE

Diary March/April 1999

TUESDAY, MARCH 16

ACTION: Parma, Bologna, Marseille and Atletico Madrid reach the semi-finals of the UEFA Cup.
GERMANY: Schalke's Dutch striker, Rene Eijkelkamp, says he will retire at the end of the season because of ankle trouble.
ITALY: Italy defender Alessandro Nesta extends his contract with Lazio for a further five years.
SCOTLAND: Celtic call for a police investigation into Mark Viduka's £3million transfer from Croatia Zagreb in December.
TURKEY: German Karl-Heinz Feldkamp is appointed to succeed John Toshack as coach of Besiktas.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17

ACTION: Holders Real Madrid are knocked out of the Champions League, losing 2-0 and 3-1 on aggregate to Kyiv Dynamo. Manchester United, Juventus and Bayern Munich join Kyiv in the semi-finals.
LEBANON: The government decides to spend £18million renovating and rebuilding stadia and other facilities for the 2000 Asian Cup.
ROMANIA: The federation switches its Euro 2000 qualifying matches away from the Steaua Bucharest ground because of the fans' poor behaviour.

THURSDAY, MARCH 18

ACTION: Chelsea, Lazio, Lokomotiv Moscow and Mallorca reach the semi-finals of the Cup-winners Cup.
DENMARK: Bo Johansson includes two newcomers is his Euro 2000 squad to face Italy – winger Jesper Gronkjaer of Ajax and reserve goalkeeper Thomas Sorensen of Sunderland.
ENGLAND: Kevin Keegan includes Chris Sutton in his first squad as stand-in national coach, for the Euro 2000 qualifier with Poland.
FRANCE: Roger Lemerre calls up Lyon midfielder Vikash Dhorasoo in the squad to face Ukraine and Armenia in Euro 2000 qualifiers.
GERMANY: Bayern Munich confirm that Brazilian forward Giovane Elber will be out for the rest of the season after he undergoes ligament surgery in Colorado.
SINGAPORE: Parliament votes to legalise soccer betting in a bid to raise finance for the domestic League and help stamp out illegal betting.
SOUTH AFRICA: France-based defender Pierre Issa is recalled to the South African squad for the African Nations Cup qualifier against Gabon.

FRIDAY, MARCH 19

ARGENTINA: Fernando Redondo's near-five-year wait for an Argentina recall ends as he is included in the squad for the friendly in Holland.
ENGLAND: Chelsea's Nigerian defender, Celestine Babayaro, is bailed by a London court on sexual assault charges.

SATURDAY, MARCH 20

ACTION: Ukraine beat Georgia 1-0 in a friendly in Tbilisi…in France, Bordeaux bounce back from their UEFA Cup thrashing in Parma to beat Strasbourg 1-0 and retain their one-point lead in the League…in Germany, Oliver Kahn sets a Bundesliga goalkeeping record of 723 minutes without conceding a goal as Bayern Munich beat Werder Bremen 1-0.
RUSSIA: PSV Eindhoven defender Yuri Nikiforov is added to Russia's squad for their Euro 2000 qualifiers against Armenia and Andorra.
YUGOSLAVIA: Red Star and Partizan fans are hurt as hooligans clash before and during the Belgrade derby.

SUNDAY, MARCH 21

ACTION: Crowd trouble erupts at the game between Croatia Zagreb and Hajduk Split as Croatia fans rip out the plastic seats in a new stand and hurl them at police…in Holland, Feyenoord slip to only their second defeat of the season, losing 4-1 to Willem II.
ITALY: Mircea Lucescu quits as coach of Internazionale immediately after a 4-0 defeat at Sampdoria.

MONDAY, MARCH 22

EGYPT: The African confederation expels Sierra Leone from the Nations Cup for failing to turn out against Guinea in Conakry.
HOLLAND: Bottom club NAC Breda sack coach Ronald Spelbos…Utrecht striker

International recall…Fernando Redondo

Michael Mols agrees to join Scottish League leaders Rangers at the season's end on a four-year contract.
RUSSIA: Moscow Spartak's Belarus defender Miroslav Romashchenko is ruled out for two months after undergoing knee surgery.
SWEDEN: AIK agree terms to sign utility player Pontus Kaamark from Leicester City…Andreas Jakobsson and Yksel Osmanovski are called up by Sweden for the Euro 2000 qualifier against Luxembourg.

TUESDAY, MARCH 23

ENGLAND: Identical twins Adam and James Chambers of West Bromwich Albion are included in the squad for the World Youth Cup in Nigeria…Sports Minister Tony Banks says "slurs" over England's public safety record by World Cup 2006 bid rivals South Africa are "grotesque" and "simply unacceptable".
ITALY: Inter appoint goalkeeping trainer Luciano Castellini as caretaker coach for the last eight matches of the season, in succession to Mircea Lucescu…the lower house of parliament gives the final assent to a law limiting any company from owning more than 60 per cent of the pay-TV rights to Serie A and other high-profile games…Sven Goran Eriksson agrees the terms to extend his contract at Lazio until June 30, 2002.
PORTUGAL: Vitoria Guimaraes agree terms to sign Sweden striker Alexander Ostlund from AIK Stockholm.
ROMANIA: Spaniard Jose Ramon Alexanco quits as coach of National Bucharest.
SPAIN: Radomir Antic is reappointed coach of Atletico Madrid, three years after guiding them to the League and Cup double. He replaces caretaker Carlos Aguiar…Coruna goalkeeper Peter Rufai is named new king of the one million-strong Idimu tribe in western Nigeria, but says he prefers to stay in Europe and earn a living from football.
TURKEY: Galatasaray's Hasan Sas is banned for six months by the federation after failing a dope test.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24

ENGLAND: Kevin Keegan surprisingly calls up Tottenham's Chris Armstrong to an injury-hit squad for the Euro 2000 qualifier against Poland.
FRANCE: Bordeaux's top scorer Sylvain Wiltord extends his contract until 2003.
GERMANY: Bayern Munich coach Ottmar Hitzfeld extends his contract until June 2003.
ROMANIA: Club president Gino Iorgulescu takes over as coach of National Bucharest in succession to Jose Ramon Alexanco.
SWITZERLAND: UEFA postpones three Euro 2000 qualifying matches in

Back to Sweden…Pontus Kaamark

Yugoslavia and Macedonia because of NATO air strikes in the region.
YUGOSLAVIA: Lazio central defender Sinisa Mihajlovic leaves Yugoslavia ahead of a NATO attack on his country but says he fully supports state President Slobodan Milosevic.

THURSDAY, MARCH 25

BOSNIA: The Euro 2000 qualifying visit to Scotland is postponed after NATO warns the federation that, because of air strikes on Yugoslavia, the safety of their flight from Sarajevo cannot be guaranteed.
GERMANY: Coach Erich Ribbeck and veteran Lothar Matthaus have to break up a national team training ground scuffle between Bayern team-mates Markus Babbel and Carsten Jancker.
ITALY: Inter confirm that Marcello Lippi will take over as coach next season.
REP IRELAND: The FAI says it will ask UEFA for November's Euro 2000 defeat by Yugoslavia in Belgrade to be replayed if other teams in Group 8 are allowed to play Yugoslavia at a neutral venue because of the situation in the Balkans.
SWITZERLAND: UEFA fines Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson £2,200 for derogatory comments about Italian football ahead of the Champions League quarter-final second leg against Inter.
UNITED STATES: College basketball star Jay Heaps switches to soccer to sign for Miami Fusion.
YUGOSLAVIA: The federation orders all its players based in NATO countries to boycott their clubs while air strikes against Serbia continue.

FRIDAY, MARCH 26

ACTION: Portugal thrash Azerbaijan 7-0 in a Euro 2000 qualifier.
ENGLAND: Chelsea's assistant manager Graham Rix is sentenced to 12 months in jail after admitting a sex offence with an under-age girl…Leverkusen's Dutch striker Erik Meijer signs a pre-contract with Liverpool.
FRANCE: Bordeaux say defender Nisa Saveljic has returned home to Yugoslavia looking for his lost family…Lyon's Swiss striker Marco Grassi, currently serving a four-match European ban, is suspended for three League games following his dismissal for elbowing Le Havre midfielder Yann Soloy in the face.
MALAYSIA: Foreign players are banned because their wage demands are costing clubs too much money and young Malaysian players are not getting a chance to prove themselves.
SPAIN: Real Madrid's Yugoslavia striker Predrag Mijatovic says he and his compatriots will not play club matches while NATO air strikes against their homeland continue.
SWITZERLAND: Grasshopper release ex-international striker Kubilay Turkyilmaz and defender Giuseppe Mazzarelli.

SATURDAY, MARCH 27

ACTION: England open a new era under Kevin Keegan by defeating Poland 3-1 in their Euro 2000 qualifier.

SUNDAY, MARCH 28

ACTION: Israel beat Cyprus 3-0 in a Euro 2000 qualifier…South Korea beat Brazil 1-0 in a friendly in Seoul.
FRANCE: Roger Lemerre recalls David Trezeguet to the national squad for the Euro 2000 qualifier against Armenia.
GERMANY: Bayern Munich's French left-back Bixente Lizarazu is ruled out for six weeks after damaging knee ligaments in his country's 0-0 draw with Ukraine.
GREECE: Former Panathinaikos coach Vassilis Daniel is appointed caretaker national coach after the resignation of Anghel Iordanescu.
SPAIN: Star Yugoslav players, including Real Madrid's Predrag Mijatovic, join a demonstration outside the US embassy in Madrid to protest against NATO air strikes on Yugoslavia.
SWITZERLAND: UEFA puts back a decision on the venue for the 2004 European Championship from July 2 to October 12 …it also postpones two more Euro 2000 qualifiers in the Balkans – Slovenia v Albania and Croatia v Malta – as NATO steps up air strikes.

MONDAY, MARCH 29

AUSTRIA: Herbert Prohaska quits as national coach after the 9-0 thrashing by Spain in a Euro 2000 qualifier.
FRANCE: Yugoslav striker Vladan Lukic vows to quit Metz for three months in protest against NATO air strikes against Serbia.
ITALY: Brazilian striker Marcio Amoroso extends his contract with Udinese until 2004.
NIGERIA: FIFA fly in two British Airways planes to help fly squads around Nigeria during the World Youth Cup.
ROMANIA: Coach Dumitru Dumitriu agrees to step down at Rapid Bucharest to allow for the return of Mircea Lucescu from Inter.

TUESDAY, MARCH 30

ACTION: Belgium hit a new low after losing 1-0 at home to Egypt.
COSTA RICA: Ajax forward Froylan Ledezma is briefly arrested by police after a gun is fired in a squabble outside a bar.
ENGLAND: Manchester United announce six-month profits of £11.1m but say they must increase ticket prices next season.

Knee trouble…Bixente Lizarazu

HONG KONG: Six days after being imprisoned for 22 months for fixing a World Cup qualifying match, three former Hong Kong internationals – goalkeeper Kevin Lok Kar-win, defender Chan Chi-keung and striker Wai Kwan-lung – are banned from the game for life.
NIGERIA: A group of prostitutes threaten nude protests at World Youth Cup matches after being barred from hotels by tournament organisers.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31

ACTION: Raul hits a hat-trick as Spain beat San Marino 6-0 on another busy European Championship day.
GERMANY: Eintracht Frankfurt sign Chinese striker Yang Chen.
ITALY: Sampdoria's French defender Saliou Lassissi is banned for three games after a scuffle during a League match against Inter; team-mates Ariel Ortega and Pierre Laigle are banned for one game each.

Heavy fine...Predrag Mijatovic

THURSDAY, APRIL 1

YUGOSLAVIA: The federation suspends the League for the duration of the war with NATO forces.

FRIDAY, APRIL 2

AUSTRIA: FK Austria sack coach Zdenko Verdenik and name sports director Friedl Koncilia as caretaker.
JAPAN: Asian confederation chief executive Peter Velappan appeals for Europe or South America to give up a World Cup place so that Asia can have an additional berth at the finals in 2002 and thus avert the threat of a boycott.
UNITED STATES: Kansas City goalkeeper Tony Meola is ruled out for six months after undergoing knee surgery.

SATURDAY, APRIL 3

ACTION: Nigeria are held 1-1 by Costa Rica in the opening match of the World Youth Cup...in Italy, Lazio are held 0-0 by Milan but move six points clear because second-placed Fiorentina lose 2-0 to Inter.

SUNDAY, APRIL 4

ACTION: In Ukraine, Kyiv Dynamo are knocked off the top by Shakhtar after being held to a goalless draw at home by Tavria Simferopol.

MONDAY, APRIL 5

SPAIN: Real Madrid fine Yugoslavia striker Predrag Mijatovic £23,000 for boycotting Sunday's game to protest about the NATO air strikes.

TUESDAY, APRIL 6

ACTION: In the UEFA Cup semi-finals first legs, Atletico Madrid lose 3-1 at home to Parma and Marseille are held goalless at home by Bologna.
AUSTRIA: Rapid's injury crisis deepens with midfielder Arnold Wetl ruled out for the rest of the season after damaging knee ligaments and Poland defender Krzysztof Ratajczyk sidelined until September after tearing an Achilles tendon.
BULGARIA: The Supreme Court upholds a government decision to revoke the licence of the Bulgarian Football Union for failing to act decisively in the Ilia Gruev doping case and permitting unlicensed clubs to play in the League.
ENGLAND: Striker Robbie Fowler is fined two weeks' wages by Liverpool and charged with misconduct by the FA after his controversial 'cocaine-sniffing' goal celebration in the derby against Everton.
HOLLAND: Fans turn out in force in Amsterdam for the second Johan Cruyff testimonial, in which Barcelona and Ajax draw 2-2.
UNITED STATES: MLS announces a ban on performance-enhancing drugs which goes beyond IOC and FIFA guidelines.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7

ACTION: In the Champions League semi-final openers, Kyiv Dynamo are held 3-3 by Bayern Munich and Manchester United are held 1-1 by Juventus...in the World Youth Cup, Mexico become the first team to guarantee a second-round place by beating Australia 3-1.

THURSDAY, APRIL 8

ACTION: In the Cup-winners Cup semi-final openers, holders Chelsea are held 1-1 at home by Mallorca, while Lokomotiv Moscow draw 1-1 with Lazio.
GERMANY: Croatia midfielder Filip Tapalovic agrees to join Munich 1860 from Schalke on a free transfer.
HOLLAND: The Euro 2000 organising committee gives Amsterdam Arena two weeks to 'free' all seats for sale or lose the right to host matches during next year's finals.

Derby win...Roma overcome Lazio

FRIDAY, APRIL 9

AUSTRIA: Otto Baric is appointed new national coach.
RUSSIA: Moscow Dynamo scout Vladimir Saidilinov is shot dead in Volgograd.

SATURDAY, APRIL 10

ACTION: In the African Nations Cup, Tunisia beat Uganda 2-0 to become the first team sure of a place in the finals... Paraguay reach the second round of the World Youth Cup by surprisingly beating hosts Nigeria 2-1.
ITALY: Prosecutor Carlo Luberti requests the indictment of 16 people, including former Olympic Committee president Mario Pescante, for alleged irregularities in the redevelopment of Rome's Olympic stadium for the 1990 World Cup.
SAUDI ARABIA: Czech coach Milan Macala is appointed new national team manager in place of German Otto Pfister.

SUNDAY, APRIL 11

ACTION: In Italy, Francesco Totti makes two goals for Marco Delvecchio and scores one himself as Roma end League leaders Lazio's 17-match unbeaten run...in Spain, Real Madrid coach John Toshack concedes defeat in the title race after a 5-1 thrashing at Celta Vigo.
AUSTRIA: Beppo Mauhart, the federation's longest-serving president, is re-elected for a further three years.
EGYPT: Four fans sue Zamalek for compensation after the team walk off against Al Ahly in protest at the expulsion of one of their players.
HOLLAND: Police arrest 134 Vitesse Arnhem fans and fine them for failing to obey an instruction to quit the Gelredome stadium after a match against Twente.
NIGERIA: Fans and riot police clash in Lagos after the hosts' 2-1 defeat by Paraguay in the World Youth Cup.
SPAIN: Salamanca dismiss coach Yosu Ortuondo after the 2-1 home defeat by Santander – Salamanca's sixth successive League loss.

MONDAY, APRIL 12

FRANCE: A court in Bordeaux jails agent Ljubomir Barin for a year and former Bordeaux general manager Didier Couecou for four months for fraud and attempted bribery of referees. Agent Licio D'Onofrio and former Bordeaux secretary Herve Bizot are fined.
GERMANY: Bayer Leverkusen agree to sign 21-year-old forward Robson Ponte on loan from Brazilian club Guarani next season.

TUESDAY, APRIL 13

SCOTLAND: Sweden striker Henrik Larsson, top scorer in the Scottish League with 37 goals, signs a new four-year contract with Celtic.
SPAIN: Paraguayan Carlos Diarte is appointed new coach of struggling Salamanca in succession to Yosu Ortuondo.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14

ACTION: Ghana, Nigeria, Brazil and Uruguay reach the quarter-finals of the World Youth Cup.
ENGLAND: Liverpool's England striker Michael Owen is ruled out for the rest of the season by a hamstring injury...the 10th anniversary of the Hillsborough disaster brings renewed calls to reopen the public inquiry into the tragedy.
ITALY: Parma are held 1-1 at home by Fiorentina in the Cup Final first leg...the League fines Roma and Lazio £15,000 each after fans display racist banners during the Rome derby.
SWITZERLAND: UEFA switches the Euro 2000 qualifier between Albania and Latvia from Tirana to Riga because of the Kosovo conflict...UEFA says all its 51 member associations will receive £80,000 at the end of the season as a 'dividend' on the profits from the Champions League.
TURKEY: Galatasaray and Besiktas draw 0-0 in the Cup Final first leg.

Compiled by Keir Radnedge

OBITUARIES

MARIO NARCIS BUGEANU, the Gloria Bistrita midfielder, has died, aged 24. Bugeanu and his girlfriend were found dead in his car in a lock-up garage having apparently committed suicide. Bugeanu had been on loan to Gloria Bistrita from Rapid Bucharest.

IGOR NETTO, who captained the Soviet Union to their two biggest triumphs, has died, aged 69. Netto, a stylish and intelligent left-half, captained the Soviet Union to victory in the 1960 European Championship in Paris and the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne. He also played in the 1958 and 1962 World Cup finals.

NAHUM STELMACH, one of Israel's greatest-ever players, has died, aged 62. Stelmach played 61 times for Israel in the 1950s and 1960s and is third on the country's all-time scorers list with 22 goals. He made his international debut in 1956 and scored Israel's first ever goal at the National stadium in Tel Aviv that year when Israel lost 2-1 to the Soviet Union.

World Service

Your complete guide to the month's stats and facts

INTERNATIONALS

Saturday, March 6

Mar 6 – Larnaca, Cyprus – friendly
Estonia 2 (Viikmae 47, Saviauk 72)
Azerbaijan 2 (K Kurbanov 1, Lychkin pen 30)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 100. **Ref:** Constantinou (Cyp)
Estonia: Tohver - Lemsalu, Kirs (Alonen 53), Hohlov-Simson, Saviauk - Smirnov, Terekhov, Svets, Viikmae - Reim, Zelinski (Kristal 60).
Azerbaijan: Kramarenko - Agayev, Kerimov, Akhmedov, Lichkin (Kurbanov 71) - Asadov (Kuliev 51), Yadullayev, Rzayev, Kurbanov (Vasiliyev 23) - Mamedov (Getman 74), Gambarov (Isayev 78).

Wednesday, March 10

Mar 10 – Valletta – friendly
Malta 0
Moldova 2 (Epureanu 73, Suharev 87)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 2,000. **Ref:** Beck (Lie)
Malta: Barry - Turner, Spiteri, Buhagiar, Said - Camilleri (Sixsmith 82), Saliba, Carabott (Cutajar 46), Agius (Nwoko 46) - Brincat (Mifsud 46), Sultana (Busuttil 46).
Moldova: Dinov (Coselev 72) - Fistican, Rebeja (Belous 65), Maievici (Tabanov 77), Stroenco - Guzun, Fischin (Rogaciov 81), Oprea (Suharev 57), Gaidamasciuc - Epureanu, Clescenco.

Tuesday, March 16

Mar 16 – Larnaca – friendly
Cyprus 1 (M Christodolou 81)
Estonia 2 (Zelinski 59, Terekhov 85)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 200. **Ref:** Loizou (Cyp)
Cyprus: Panayiotou (Shimitras 67) - G Christodolou (Christophi 46), Pittas, Pashalias (Aristotelous 67), Sophocleous (N Nicolau 55) - Melanarkitis (Chrysostomou 60), Theodotou, Spoljaric, Okkas (Dimitrou 61) - M Christodlou, Agathocleous (A Nicolau 74).
Estonia: Poom - Kirs, Lemsalu, Hohlov-Simson, Saviauk - Kristal, Alonen (Smirnov 86), Reim, Terekhov (Svets 86) - Oper (Zelinski 55), Viikmae.

Sunday, March 28

Mar 28 – Seoul – friendly
South Korea 1 (Kim Do-hoon 90)
Brazil 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 75,000. **Ref:** Selearajan (Mly)
South Korea: Kim Bying-ji - Shin Hong-ki (Choi Sung-young 72), Lee Lim-saeng, Kim Tae-young (Kim Sang-hoon 77), Hong Myung-bo, Ha Seok-ju - Seo Dong-won, Kim Doh-keun.
Brazil: Rogerio Ceni - Cafu, Cesar, Odvan, Serginho (Felipe 82) - Ze Roberto, Juninho (Fabio Junior 65), Flavio Conceicao, Rivaldo - Amoroso, Jardel (Alessandro 65).

Mar 28 – Port of Spain – friendly
Trinidad & Tobago 2 (Nakhid 22, John 55)
Jamaica 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 28,000
Trinidad & Tobago: Hislop - David (Carrington), M Andrews, Rougier, Julien - Marcelle (Arnold Dwarika), Latapy (Mulraine), Nakhid, Nixon - John, Yorke (Knights).
Jamaica: Lawrence (Ricketts) - F Davis, Goodison, Daes, Waugh - Gardner, Griffiths, Peterkin, Whitmore - Fuller (Kerr), Hall (D Johnson).

Tuesday, March 30

Mar 30 – Liege – friendly
Belgium 0
Egypt 1 (Hazem Imam 14)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 15,000. **Ref:** Tavel (Swi)
Belgium: Gaspercic - Genaux, Vidovic, De Boeck, Leonard (Goor 74) - Janssens (Ernst 46), Wilmots (Tanghe 62) - Walem - Luis Oliveira (M Mpenza 62), E Mpenza, Martens.
Egypt: Nader El Sayed - Ibrahim Hassan, Mohamed Omara (Mohamed Youssef 65), Hany Ramzy, Samir Ibrahim, Medhat Abdel Hady, Yasser Radwan, Abdelsatar Sabry, Hazem Imam (Abdelhamid Bassiouni 90), Ahmed Hassan (Abdel Zaher El Saka 90), Hossam Hassan.

Wednesday, March 31

Mar 31 – Baku – Euro 2000 qualifier, Gp 7
Azerbaijan 0
Romania 1 (Petre 49)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Luinge (Hol)
Azerbaijan: Mamedov - Agayev (Tagiev 90), Asadov, Abushov, Akhmedov, Lychkin - Kerimov, Tagizade (Gambarov 72), Syrkhayev, Gurbanov (Rzhayev 70), Gurbanov.
Romania: Stelea - Contra, Ciobotariu, Lupescu - Filipescu, Petre, Galca, Dorinel Munteanu, Rosu (Florea 80) - Moldovan, Craioveanu (Michalcea 82).

Mar 31 – Paris – Euro 2000 qualifier, Gp 4
France 2 (Wiltord 3, Dugarry 45)
Armenia 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 78,852. **Ref:** Bikas (Gre)
France: Barthez - Thuram (Karembeu 79), Desailly, Blanc - Deschamps, Vieira, Djorkaeff (Pires 69), Boghossian - Anelka, Wiltord, Dugarry (Trezeguet 46).
Armenia: Berezovsky - Sukiasyan (Khachatryan 40), Mkrychyan, Vardanyan, Hovsepyan, Hovannisyan, A Petrosyan, Voskanyan (Hyrapetyan 77), Sargsyan, Shakhgeldyan (Yesayan 53), Mikaelyan.

Mar 31 – Nurnberg – Euro 2000 qualifier, Gp 3
Germany 2 (Jeremies 31, Neuville 37)
Finland 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 40,758
Germany: Kahn - Matthaus, Babbel, Worns, Strunz, Heinrich, Jeremies, Hamann (Nowotny 72), Neuville (Kirsten 65), Bierhoff, Bode (Jancker 76).
Finland: Niemi - Ylonen, Kinnunen, Kautonen (Kolkka 72), Hyppia, Reini (Lehkosuo 89), Ilola, Rihilati, Litmanen, Paatelainen (Saastamoinen 46), Johansson.

Mar 31 – Amsterdam – friendly
Holland 1 (Davids 10)
Argentina 1 (Batistuta 84)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 51,000. **Ref:** Poll (Eng)
Holland: Van der Sar - Reiziger, Van Wonderen (Konterman 46), F De Boer, Cocu, Seedorf, Zenden, Davids, Kluivert, Bergkamp (Van Hintum 78), Overmars (Van Vossen 57). *Sent off: Davids 73mins.*
Argentina: Roa - Ayala, Vivas, Sensini (G Lopez 80), Redondo, Pochettino, C Lopez, J Zanetti, Batistuta, Ortega (Guglielminpietro 46; Crespo 82), Veron.

Mar 31 – Ancona – Euro 2000 qualifier, Gp 1
Italy 1 (Inzaghi pen 31)
Belarus 1 (Bialkevich 24)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 20,735. **Ref:** Piraux (Blg)
Italy: Buffon - Panucci, Maldini, Cannavaro, Nesta, D Baggio, Di Biagio (Gianichedda 64), Conte, Totti (Di Francesco 46), Inzaghi, Chiesa (R Baggio 64).
Belarus: Tumilovich - Yakhimovich, Lavrik, Lukhvich, Ostrovsky, Gurenko, Orlovsky, Romashchenko, Bialkevich, Makovsky, Baranov.

Mar 31 – Kingston – friendly
Jamaica 3 (Gayle 5, Whitmore 37, Johnson 47)
Paraguay 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 25,000
Jamaica: Lawrence - Davis (Green 73), Goodison, Dawes, Waugh - Whitmore, Gardner, Simpson (Griffiths 72) - Fuller (Johnson 46), Gayle (Kerr 70).
Paraguay: Villar (Tavarelli 46) - Esteban (Rolan 46), Caniza, Acosta, Cesar - Gonzalez, Ramon, Alveranga (Centurion 71), Humberto - Caballero (A Rivas 71), Cardozo (Gomez 80).

Mar 31 – Tokyo – friendly
Japan 0
Brazil 2 (Amoroso 12, Emerson 56)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 53,903. **Ref:** Shamsul Maidin (Sin)
Japan: Shimoda - Ihara (Morioka 63), Akita, Soma, Saito - Tasaka, Nanami, Ito, Nakata - Nakayama (Yanagisawa 82), Jo (Lopes 82).
Brazil: Rogerio Ceni - Cafu (Rogerio 66), Odvan, Cesar (Scheidt 46), Felipe - Rivaldo, Flavio Conceicao, Juninho, Emerson - Amoroso, Fabio Junior.

Mar 31 – Riga – Euro 2000 qualifier, Gp 2
Latvia 0
Greece 0
Att: 3,200. **Ref:** Fisker (Den)
Latvia: Karavajevs - Lukasevics, Astafjevs, Zemlinskis, Lobanovs, Sarando (Stepanovs 62), Ivanovs, Blagonadezdins (Lukashevics 46), Pahars, Mihalops (Isakovs 29), Stolcers.
Greece: Amatsidis - Kasapis, Ouzounidis, Dabizas, Mavrogenidis, Zagorakis, Yannakopoulos, Georgatos, Machlas (Anastasiou 77), Liberopoulos, Nikolaidis.

Mar 31 – Vaduz – Euro 2000 qualifier, Gp 7
Liechtenstein 0
Portugal 5 (Rui Costa pen 16, 79, Luis Figo 49, Paulo Madeira 54, 60)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 3,000. **Ref:** Orrason (Ice)
Liechtenstein: Jehle - Hanselmann (Ospelt 84), Martin Stocklasa, Lingg, Ritter, Michael Stocklasa (Beck 65), Wohlwend (Burgmeier 82), Mario Frick, Hasler, Telser, C Frick.
Portugal: Vitor Baia - Secretario, Paulo Madeira, Fernando Couto, Dimas, Paulo Sousa, Rui Costa, Sergio Conceicao (Nuno Capucho 88), Luis Figo, Sa Pinto (Pauleta 61), Joao Pinto (Nuno Gomes 75).

Mar 31 – Vilnius – Euro 2000 qualifier, Gp 9
Lithuania 1 (Fomenka 83)
Estonia 2 (Terehov 49, 77)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 3,000. **Ref:** Trentalange (Ita)
Lithuania: Stauce - Skerla, Zutautas, Semberas, Vainoras, Zvirgzdauskas, Maciulevicius, Mikalajunas, Preiksaitis, Skarbalius (Gorveckus 35, Buitkus 52), Mikulenas (Fomenka 46).
Estonia: Poom - Lemsalu, Kirs, Hohlov-Simson, Saviauk, Sbets (Kristal 70), Terehhov, Oper (Zelinski 67), Smirnov (Alonen 90), Reim, Viikmae.

Mar 31 – Luxembourg – Euro 2000 qualifier, Gp 5
Luxembourg 0
Bulgaria 2 (Stoichkov 18, Iordanov 38)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 3,004. **Ref:** Mitrovic (Sln)
Luxembourg: Felgen - Ferron (Holtz 75), Vanek, Strasser, Deville, Saibene, Birsens, Theis (Deville 88), Posing (Zaritski 46), Cardoni, Christophe.
Bulgaria: Zdravkov - Kishishev, Markov, Stoyanov (Petkov 48), Iordanov, Iankov, S Petrov, Stoichkov (Todorov 71), Iovov (G Ivanov 79), M Petkov, Iliev.

Mar 31 – Chisinau – Euro 2000 qualifier, Gp 3
Moldova 0
Northern Ireland 0
Att: 9,237. **Ref:** Trivcovic (Cro)
Moldova: Dinov - Fistikan, Rebeza, Sosnovschii, Guzun, Stroienco, Suharev, Oprea (Stratulat 90), Gaidamasciuc, Epureanu, Clescenco.
N Ireland: Taylor - Patterson (A Hughes 63), Horlock, Lomas, Williams, Morrow, Gillespie, Lennon, Dowie, M Hughes, Robinson.

Mar 31 – Chorzow – Euro 2000 qualifier, Gp 5
Poland 0
Sweden 1 (Ljungberg 36)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 32,000. **Ref:** Merk (Ger)
Poland: Sidorczuk - Waldoch, Lapinski, Siadaczka (Adamczuk 82), Zielinski, Majak (Kowalczyk 70), Michalski (Bak 87), Iwan, Juskowiak, Brzeczek, Trzeciak.
Sweden: Hedman - Kamark, P Andersson, Bjorklund, Lucic, Schwarz, Mild (N Alexandersson 73), Mjallby, Ljungberg, Larsson (J Petersson 89), K Andersson.

Mar 31 – Moscow – Euro 2000 qualifier, Gp 4
Russia 6 (Titov 8, Beschastnykh 11, 62, Onopko 42, Tsymbalar 50, Alenichev 90)
Andorra 1 (Julia Sanchez 73)
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Vuorela (Fin)
Russia: Filimonov - Khlestov, Smertin, Tsymbalar, Yevseyev (Tikhonov 46), Alenichev, Onopko, Karpin, Titov, Shirko, Beschastnykh.
Andorra: Alvarez - Alonso (Gonzalez 57), Garcia, Martin, Toni Lima, Ildefunso Lima, Pol, Sonejee, Jimenez, Lucendo (Sanchez 65), Ruiz.

Mar 31 – Serravalle – Euro 2000 qualifier, Gp 6
San Marino 0
Spain 6 (Fran 20, Raul 45, 59, 66, Urzaiz 49, Etxeberria 72)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 1,500. **Ref:** Maric (Cro)
San Marino: Federico Gasperoni - Gennari, Marani, Mauro Valentini, Vittorio Valentini, Gobbi (Della Balda 51), Manzaroli, Bryan Gasperoni, Montagna (Gualtieri 60), Selva, Zonzini.
Spain: Canizares - Michel Salgado, Sergi, Marcelino, Paco - Guardiola (Engonga 69), Valeron (Helguera 75), Fran, Etxeberria, Urzaiz (Dani 62), Raul.

Mar 31 – Glasgow, Celtic Pk – Euro 2000 qual, Gp 9
Scotland 1 (Jess 68)
Czech Republic 2 (Elliott og 27, Smicer 35)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 44,513. **Ref:** Milton Nielsen (Den)
Scotland: Sullivan - Weir, Boyd, Lambert, Elliott, Davidson (Johnston 52), Hopkin, Burley, Jess, McAllister (Hutchison 64), McCann.
Czech Rep: Srnicek - Votava, Suchoparek, Nedved, Hornak, Hasek, Nemec, Poborsky (Rada 76), Lokvenc (Kuka 70), Smicer (Baranek 84), Berger.

Mar 31 – Bratislava – Euro 2000 qualifier, Gp 7
Slovakia 0
Hungary 0
Att: 12,000
Slovakia: Konig - Kratochvil, Zeman (Dzurik 14), Varga, Karhan, Balis, Tomaschek, Dubovsky, Zatek (Hrncar 78), Majoros, Pinte.
Hungary: Kiraly - Korsos, Vilmos Seboek, Hrutka, Matyus, Pisont, Halmai, Illes, Jozsef Seboek, Feher (Hamar 63), N Toth.

Mar 31 – Zurich – Euro 2000 qualifier, Gp 1
Switzerland 2 (Chapuisat 4, 70)
Wales 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 13,500. **Ref:** Liba (Cze)
Switzerland: Brunner - Jeanneret, Fournier, Henchoz, Wolf, Vogel, Muller, Wicky, Chapuisat, Sforza, Cornisetti (Buhlmann 67).
Wales: Jones (Crossley 26) - Robinson, Pembridge, Savage, Symons, Coleman, Johnson, Saunders, Blake (Hartson 64), Hughes (Bellamy 75), Speed.

Mar 31 – Kiev – Euro 2000 qualifier, Gp 4
Ukraine 1 (Vaschuk 59)
Iceland 1 (Sigurdsson 66)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 35,000. **Ref:** Dani (Isr)
Ukraine: Shovkovskyi - Luzhnyi, Holovko, Vaschuk, Mykitin, Husin, Popov (Kalitvintsev 75), Skachenko (Maximov 46), Kossovskyi, Shevchenko, Rebrov.
Iceland: B Kristinsson - Helgason, Larus Sigurdsson, Sigurdur Jonsson, Adolfsson, R Kristinsson (Kolvidsson 80), A Gunnlaugsson, Eyjolfur Sverrisson, Helgi Sigurdsson (Sverrir Sverrisson 85), Thordur Gudjonsson, B Gunnarsson.

Mar 31 – Maracaibo – friendly
Venezuela 0
Colombia 0
Att: 10,000. **Ref:** Borgasano
Venezuela: San House - Jimenez, Tortolero, Rey, McIntosh, Alvarez, De Pablo (Rivas 32), Duno, Urdaneta, Casseres (Garcia 60), Rondon.
Colombia: Julio - Gonzalez, Portocarrero, Galarcio, Mazziri, Bolano (Dinas 67), Del Toro, Oviedo (Montano 54), Hurtado (Restrepo 75), Tellez (Vallestero 58), J Castillo.

Saturday, April 10

Apr 10 – Kampala – African Nations Cup qualifier
Uganda 0
Tunisia 2 (Gabsi Hassan 18, Faouzi Rouissi 40)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 25,000

Apr 10 – Curepipe – African Nations Cup qualifier
Mauritius 1 (Perle 31)
Angola 1 (Mateus Agostinho 16)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 3,979

Sunday, April 11

Apr 11 – Maputo – African Nations Cup qualifier
Mozambique 1
Cameroon 6
Att: 18,000

Apr 11 – Casablanca – African Nations Cup qualifier
Morocco 1 (Chippo 40)
Togo 1 (Oyawole 67)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 50,000. **Ref:** Boukhir (Tun)

Apr 11 – Abidjan – African Nations Cup qualifier
Ivory Coast 2 (Ibrahim Bakayoko 20, Joel Tehi 25)
Congo 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 40,000

Apr 11 – Bamako – African Nations Cup qualifier
Mali 2
Namibia 1
Att: 20,000

Apr 11 – Libreville – African Nations Cup qualifier
Gabon 1 (Lindo pen 90)
South Africa 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 18,000

Apr 11 – Ouagadougou – African Nations Cup qual
Burkina Faso 3 (Opango Ramadani og 3, Mamadou Zongo pen 6, Bourema Zongo 15)
Burundi 1 (Djouma Mosi 29)
HT: 3-1. **Att:** 25,000

Apr 11 – Lusaka – African Nations Cup qualifier
Zambia 1 (Kamwandi 8)
Kenya 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 40,000

Apr 11 – Kinshasa – African Nations Cup qualifier
DR Congo 2 (Kimoto Okidankoy 7, Lokose Epangala 46)
Madagascar 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 75,000

Apr 11 – Annaba – African Nations Cup qualifier
Algeria 4 (Merakchi 40, 45, Saifi 60, Kpoto og 85)
Liberia 1 (Konlwoh 61)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 40,000

Wednesday, April 14

Apr 14 – Monterrey – friendly
Mexico 0
Ecuador 0
Att: 25,000
Mexico: Rios (Perez 46) - Pardo, Joel Sanchez, Almaguer (Villa 71), Carmona - Lara (Zepeda 46), Ramon Ramirez, Chavez (Rafael Garcia 46) - Blanco, Luis Garcia (Arellano 54), Hernandez.
Ecuador: Cevallos - Ayovi (Borja 71), Ivan Hurtado, Montano, Cagua - Arangono, Carbali, Blandon, Aguinaga (Chala 46) - Grazziani (Delgado 46), Kaviedes (Eduardo Hurtado 46).

OTHER INTERNATIONALS

Apr 7 – Brasilia
Brazil U-23 7 (Denilson pen 23, Marcos Paulo 35, Warley 60, Roni 66, 78, Arujo 83, Rodrigo pen 89)
United States U-23 0

Central American Championship

Group 1: Costa Rica 7 Belize 0; Honduras 5 Belize 1; Honduras 1 Costa Rica 0.
Group 2: Guatemala 1 Nicaragua 0; Guatemala 1 El Salvador 1; El Salvador 1 Nicaragua 0.
Final round: Costa Rica 1 Guatemala 0; Honduras 3 El Salvador 1; Guatemala 1 El Salvador 0; Honduras 2 Costa Rica 1; Guatemala 2 Honduras 0; Costa Rica 4 El Salvador 0. Points: Costa Rica 6, Guatemala 6, Honduras 6, El Salvador 0.
Costa Rica, Guatemala and Honduras qualify for the CONCACAF Gold Cup 2000. El Salvador to play off against Canada.

European U-21 Championship

Gp 1: Mar 26 (Odense) – Denmark 1 (Rommedahl 4) Italy 2 (Pirlo pen 35, Ventola 90).
Mar 30 (Winterthur) – Switzerland 1 (Yakin 2) Wales 0.
Mar 31 (Giulianova) – Italy 4 (Pirlo pen 24, pen 52, Scarlato 44, Bucchi 80) Belarus 1 (Razoumov 5).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	4	4	0	0	9	3	12
Switzerland	3	2	0	1	3	1	6
Denmark	4	1	1	2	5	6	4
Wales	4	0	2	2	3	5	2
Belarus	3	0	1	2	1	6	1

Gp 2: Mar 26 (Athens) – Greece 2 (Karagounis 10pen, Choutos 44) Norway 1 (Lange 45).
Mar 27 (Tbilisi) – Georgia 0 Slovenia 0.
Mar 30 (Riga) – Latvia 0 Greece 2 (Chuotos 15, Sirospoulos 45).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Greece	5	4	1	0	14	5	13
Norway	4	3	0	1	10	4	9
Georgia	4	1	1	2	4	5	4
Latvia	4	1	0	3	2	6	3
Albania	3	1	0	2	2	9	3
Slovenia	4	0	2	2	3	6	2

Gp 3: Mar 26 – N Ireland 1 (Hertzsch og 52) Germany 0.
(Istanbul) – Turkey 2 (Burak Akdis 22, Gungor Ozturk 43) Moldova 0.
Mar 30 (Chisinau) – Lodova 0 Northern Ireland 0.
(Weismain) – Germany 2 (Blank 35, Nehrbauer 87) Finland 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Turkey	4	3	1	0	7	1	10
Germany	4	2	0	2	4	3	6
Northern Ireland	5	1	3	1	3	4	6
Finland	4	1	2	1	3	4	5
Moldova	5	0	2	3	1	6	2

Gp 4: Mar 26 (Paris) – France 4 (Trezeguet 6, 44, 58, 66) Ukraine 0.
Mar 27 (Yerevan) – Armenia 0 Russia 2 (Bezrodny 52, Adiyev 80).
Mar 30 (Kyiv) – Ukraine 5 (Zubov 45, Oleinik 48, Balitsky 67, Timoshchyuk 71, Yashchyuk 88) Iceland 1 (Bjorn Gudjonsson 16).
Mar 31 (Paris) – France 3 (Henry 10, Maoulida pen 66, 77) Armenia 1 (Minasian 87).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ukraine	4	3	0	1	14	5	9
France	4	3	0	1	10	3	9
Russia	4	3	0	1	6	3	9
Armenia	4	1	0	3	4	14	3
Iceland	4	0	0	4	3	12	0

Gp 5: Mar 26 (Stockholm) – Sweden 3 (Berglund 4, Mellberg 79, Wallerstedt 90) Luxembourg 0.
Mar 26 (Southampton) – England 5 (Bowyer 41, 81, Lampard pen 55, 60, Hendrie 72) Poland 0.
Mar 30 (Katowice) – Poland 2 (Wichniarek 7, Sobczak 40) Sweden 0.
Mar 31 (Hautcharage) – Luxembourg 0 Bulgaria 3 (Tchilikov 8, 50, Tchomakov 20).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
England	4	4	0	0	13	0	12
Bulgaria	4	2	1	1	7	4	7
Poland	4	2	1	1	9	7	7
Sweden	4	1	0	3	4	6	3
Luxembourg	4	0	0	4	0	16	0

Gp 6: Mar 26 (Valencia) – Spain 4 (Raul Tamudo 50, 70, Miguel Angel Angulo 83, Xavi Hernandez 89) Austria 0.
Mar 27 (Herzliya) – Israel 1 (Ilan Tal 65) Cyprus 1 (Poiadgi 50).
Mar 30 (Amsterdam) – Holland 0 Spain 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spain	4	4	0	0	12	1	12
Holland	4	3	0	1	9	3	9
Cyprus	4	1	1	2	4	8	4
Israel	4	1	1	2	2	8	4
Austria	4	0	0	4	3	10	0

Gp 7: Mar 25 (Marco de Canavezes) – Portugal 5 (Zeferino 12, 44, 58, Boa Morte 26, Pacheco 60) Azerbaijan 0.
Mar 26 (Bucharest) – Romania 0 Slovakia 1 (Sedlac 90).
Mar 30 (Sumqayit) – Azerbaijan 0 Romania 2 (Mutu pen 13, Luca 27).
(Bratislava) – Slovakia 4 (Gresko 25, Sedlak 41, Peter Babnic 48, Czinege 63) Hungary 1 (Balasko 84).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Slovakia	4	4	0	0	8	2	12
Portugal	4	2	1	1	9	2	7
Romania	4	2	1	1	5	3	7
Azerbaijan	4	1	0	3	3	10	3
Hungary	4	0	0	4	3	11	0

Gp 8:

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Croatia	3	2	1	0	9	2	7
Rep Ireland	3	1	2	0	5	4	5
Yugoslavia	2	1	1	0	6	2	4
Malta	5	1	0	4	7	12	3
Macedonia	3	1	0	2	2	9	3

Gp 9: Mar 26 (Blsany) – Czech Republic 1 (Lukes 19) Lithuania 0.
Mar 30 (Vilnius) – Lithuania 4 (Grazhiunas 27, Poshkus 40, 48, Jokshus 60) Estonia 1 (Oun 82).
(Motherwell) – Scotland 0 Czech Rep 1 (Sionko 46).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Czech Republic	5	4	1	0	7	0	13
Lithuania	5	2	1	2	8	3	7
Belgium	4	2	1	1	5	4	7
Scotland	5	1	2	2	4	5	5
Bosnia	3	1	1	1	3	6	4
Estonia	4	0	0	4	3	12	0

EURO 2000 QUALIFIERS

Group 1

05.09.98 .....Wales Italy 0-2
05.09.98 .....Belarus-Denmark 0-0
10.10.98 .....Italy-Switzerland 2-0
10.10.98 .....Denmark-Wales 1-2
14.10.98 .....Wales-Belarus 3-2
14.10.98 .....Switzerlan-Denmark 1-1
27.03.99 .....Belarus-Switzerland 0-1
27.03.99 .....Denmark-Italy 1-2
31.03.99 .....Switzerland-Wales 2-0
31.03.99 .....Italy-Belarus 1-1
05.06.99 .....Italy-Wales
05.06.99 .....Denmark-Belarus
09.06.99 .....Switzerland-Italy
09.06.99 .....Wales-Denmark
04.09.99 .....Belarus-Wales
04.09.99 .....Denmark-Switzerland
08.09.99 .....Switzerland-Belarus
08.09.99 .....Italy-Denmark
09.10.99 .....Wales-Switzerland
09.10.99 .....Belarus-Italy

GROUP 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	4	3	1	0	7	2	10
Switzerland	4	2	1	1	4	3	7
Wales	4	2	0	2	5	7	6
Belarus	4	0	2	2	3	5	2
Denmark	4	0	2	2	3	5	2

Group 2

05.09.98 .....Georgia-Albania 1-0
06.09.98 .....Greece-Slovenia 2-2
06.09.98 .....Norway-Latvia 1-3
10.10.98 .....Slovenia-Norway 1-2
10.10.98 .....Latvia-Georgia 1-0
14.10.98 .....Norway-Albania 2-2
14.10.98 .....Greece-Georgia 3-0
14.10.98 .....Slovenia-Latvia 1-0
18.11.98 .....Albania-Greece 0-0
27.03.99 .....Greece-Norway 0-2
27.03.99 .....Georgia-Slovenia 1-1
31.03.99 .....Slovenia-Albania .....Postp.
31.03.99 .....Latvia-Greece 0-0
28.04.99 .....Albania-Latvia
28.04.99 .....Georgia-Norway
30.05.99 .....Norway-Georgia
05.06.99 .....Albania-Norway
05.06.99 .....Georgia-Greece
05.06.99 .....Latvia-Slovenia
09.06.99 .....Albania-Slovenia
09.06.99 .....Greece-Latvia
18.08.99 .....Slovenia-Albania
04.09.99 .....Norway-Greece
04.09.99 .....Latvia-Albania
04.09.99 .....Slovenia-Georgia
08.09.99 .....Greece-Albania
08.09.99 .....Norway-Slovenia
08.09.99 .....Georgia-Latvia
09.10.99 .....Albania-Georgia
09.10.99 .....Slovenia-Greece
09.10.99 .....Latvia-Norway

GROUP 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Latvia	4	2	1	1	4	2	7
Norway	4	2	1	1	7	6	7
Greece	5	1	3	1	5	4	6
Slovenia	4	1	2	1	5	5	5
Georgia	4	1	1	2	2	5	4
Albania	3	0	2	1	2	3	2

Group 3

05.09.98 .....Finland-Moldova 3-2
05.09.98 .....Turkey-Northern Ireland 3-0
10.10.98 .....Turkey-Germany 1-0
10.10.98 .....Northern Ireland-Finland 1-0
14.10.98 .....Moldova-Germany 1-3
14.10.98 .....Turkey-Finland 1-3
18.11.98 .....Northern Ireland-Moldova 2-2
27.03.99 .....Northern Ireland-Germany 0-3
27.03.99 .....Turkey-Moldova 2-0
31.03.99 .....Germany-Finland 2-0
31.03.99 .....Moldova-Northern Ireland 0-0
04.06.99 .....Germany-Moldova
05.06.99 .....Finland-Turkey
09.06.99 .....Moldova-Finland
04.09.99 .....Finland-Germany
04.09.99 .....Northern Ireland-Turkey
08.09.99 .....Germany-Northern Ireland
08.09.99 .....Moldova-Turkey
09.10.99 .....Germany-Turkey
09.10.99 .....Finland-Northern Ireland

GROUP 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	4	3	0	1	8	2	9
Turkey	4	3	0	1	7	3	9
Finland	4	2	0	2	6	6	6
N Ireland	5	1	2	2	3	8	5
Moldova	5	0	2	3	5	10	2

Group 4

05.09.98 .....Armenia-Andorra 3-1
05.09.98 .....Ukraine-Russia 3-2
05.09.98 .....Iceland-France 1-1
10.10.98 .....Andorra-Ukraine 0-2
10.10.98 .....Russia-France 2-3
10.10.98 .....Armenia-Iceland 0-0
14.10.98 .....Ukraine-Armenia 2-0
14.10.98 .....France-Andorra 2-0
14.10.98 .....Iceland-Russia 1-0
27.03.99 .....Andorra-Iceland 0-2
27.03.99 .....France-Ukraine 0-0
27.03.99 .....Armenia-Russia 0-3
31.03.99 .....Ukraine-Iceland 1-1
31.03.99 .....Russia-Andorra 6-1
31.03.99 .....France-Armenia 2-0
05.06.99 .....Ukraine-Andorra
05.06.99 .....France-Russia
05.06.99 .....Iceland-Armenia
09.06.99 .....Andorra-France
09.06.99 .....Russia-Iceland
09.06.99 .....Armenia-Ukraine
04.09.99 .....Ukraine-France
04.09.99 .....Iceland-Andorra
04.09.99 .....Russia-Armenia
08.09.99 .....Andorra-Russia
08.09.99 .....Iceland-Ukraine
08.09.99 .....Armenia-France
09.10.99 .....France-Iceland
09.10.99 .....Russia-Ukraine
09.10.99 .....Andorra-Armenia

GROUP 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
France	5	3	2	0	8	3	11
Ukraine	5	3	2	0	8	3	11
Iceland	5	2	3	0	5	2	9
Russia	5	2	0	3	13	8	6
Armenia	5	1	1	3	3	8	4
Andorra	5	0	0	5	2	15	0

Group 5

05.09.98 .....Sweden-England 2-1
06.09.98 .....Bulgaria-Poland 0-3
10.10.98 .....Poland-Luxembourg 3-0
10.10.98 .....England-Bulgaria 0-0
14.10.98 .....Bulgaria-Sweden 0-1
14.10.98 .....Luxembourg-England 0-3
27.03.99 .....Sweden-Luxembourg 2-0
27.03.99 .....England-Poland 3-1
31.03.99 .....Luxembourg-Bulgaria 0-2
31.03.99 .....Poland-Sweden 0-1
05.06.99 .....Poland-Bulgaria
05.06.99 .....England-Sweden
09.06.99 .....Luxembourg-Poland
09.06.99 .....Bulgaria-England
04.09.99 .....Sweden-Bulgaria
04.09.99 .....England-Luxembourg
08.09.99 .....Luxembourg-Sweden
08.09.99 .....Poland-England
09.10.99 .....Sweden-Poland
10.10.99 .....Bulgaria-Luxembourg

GROUP 5

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sweden	4	4	0	0	6	1	12
England	4	2	1	1	7	3	7
Poland	4	2	0	2	7	4	6
Bulgaria	4	1	1	2	2	4	4
Luxembourg	4	0	0	4	0	10	0

Group 6

05.09.98 .....Austria-Israel 1-1
05.09.98 .....Cyprus-Spain 3-2
10.10.98 .....Cyprus-Austria 0-3
10.10.98 .....San Marino-Israel 0-5
14.10.98 .....San Marino-Austria 1-4
14.10.98 .....Israel-Spain 1-2
18.11.98 .....San Marino-Cyprus 0-1
10.02.99 .....Cyprus-San Marino 4-0
27.03.99 .....Spain-Austria 9-0
28.03.99 .....Israel-Cyprus 3-0
31.03.99 .....San Marino-Spain 0-6
28.04.99 .....Austria-San Marino
05.06.99 .....Spain-San Marino
06.06.99 .....Israel-Austria
04.09.99 .....Austria-Spain
05.09.99 .....Cyprus-Israel
08.09.99 .....Israel-San Marino
08.09.99 .....Spain-Cyprus
09.10.99 .....Spain-Israel
10.10.99 .....Austria-Cyprus

GROUP 6

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spain	4	3	0	1	19	4	9
Cyprus	5	3	0	2	8	8	9
Israel	4	2	1	1	10	3	7
Austria	4	2	1	1	8	11	7
San Marino	5	0	0	5	1	20	0

Group 7

02.09.98 .....Romania-Liechtenstein 7-0
05.09.98 .....Slovakia-Azerbaijan 3-0
06.09.98 .....Hungary-Portugal 0-1
10.10.98 .....Portugal-Romania 0-1
10.10.98 .....Liechtenstein-Slovakia 0-4
10.10.98 .....Azerbaijan-Hungary 0-4
14.10.98 .....Hungary-Romania 1-1
14.10.98 .....Slovakia-Portugal 0-3
14.10.98 .....Liechtenstein-Azerbaijan 2-1
26.03.99 .....Portugal-Azerbaijan 7-0
27.03.99 .....Romania-Slovakia 0-0
27.03.99 .....Hungary-Liechtenstein 5-0
31.03.99 .....Slovakia-Hungary 0-0
31.03.99 .....Liechtenstein-Portugal 0-5
31.03.99 .....Azerbaijan-Romania 0-1
05.06.99 .....Portugal-Slovakia
05.06.99 .....Romania-Hungary
05.06.99 .....Azerbaijan-Liechtenstein
09.06.99 .....Hungary-Slovakia
09.06.99 .....Portugal-Liechtenstein
09.06.99 .....Romania-Azerbaijan
03.09.99 .....Azerbaijan-Portugal
04.09.99 .....Slovakia-Romania
04.09.99 .....Liechtenstein-Hungary
08.09.99 .....Romania-Portugal
08.09.99 .....Slovakia-Liechtenstein
08.09.99 .....Hungary-Azerbaijan
09.10.99 .....Liechtenstein-Romania
09.10.99 .....Azerbaijan-Slovakia
10.10.99 .....Portugal-Hungary

GROUP 7

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Portugal	5	4	0	1	18	2	12
Romania	5	3	2	0	10	1	11
Hungary	5	2	2	1	11	4	8
Slovakia	5	2	2	1	7	3	8
Liechtenstein	5	1	0	4	2	22	3
Azerbaijan	5	0	0	5	1	17	0

Group 8

05.09.98 .....Rep Ireland-Croatia 2-0
06.09.98 .....Macedonia-Malta 4-0
10.10.98 .....Malta-Croatia 1-4
14.10.98 .....Rep Ireland-Malta 5-0
14.10.98 .....Croatia-Macedonia 3-2
18.11.98 .....Malta-Macedonia 1-2
18.11.98 .....Yugoslavia-Rep Ireland 1-0
10.02.98 .....Malta-Yugoslavia 0-3
27.03.99 .....Macedonia-Rep Ireland .....Postp.
27.03.99 .....Yugoslavia-Croatia .....Postp.
31.03.99 .....Croatia-Malta .....Postp.
31.03.99 .....Yugoslavia-Macedonia .....Postp.
05.06.99 .....Macedonia-Croatia
05.06.99 .....Rep Ireland-Yugoslavia
09.06.99 .....Rep Ireland-Macedonia
09.06.99 .....Yugoslavia-Malta
18.08.99 .....Yugoslavia-Croatia
04.09.99 .....Croatia-Rep Ireland
04.09.99 .....Yugoslavia-Macedonia
08.09.99 .....Malta-Rep Ireland
08.09.99 .....Macedonia-Yugoslavia
09.10.99 .....Macedonia-Rep Ireland
10.10.99 .....Croatia-Yugoslavia
TBA.....Croatia-Malta

GROUP 8

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rep of Ireland	3	2	0	1	7	1	6
Macedonia	3	2	0	1	8	4	6
Yugoslavia	2	2	0	0	4	0	6
Croatia	3	2	0	1	7	5	6
Malta	5	0	0	5	2	18	0

Group 9

04.06.98 .....Estonia-Faroe Islands 5-0
19.08.98 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Faroe Is 1-0
05.09.98 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina Estonia 1-1
05.09.98 .....Lithuania-Scotland 0-0
06.09.98 .....Faroe Islands-Czech Republic 0-1
10.10.98 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Czech Rep 1-3
10.10.98 .....Lithuania-Faroe Islands 0-0
10.10.98 .....Scotland-Estonia 3-2
14.10.98 .....Lithuania-Bosnia-Herzegovina 4-2
14.10.98 .....Scotland-Faroe Islands 2-1
14.10.98 .....Czech Republic-Estonia 4-1
27.03.99 .....Czech Republic-Lithuania 2-0
27.03.99 .....Scotland-Bosnia-Herzegovina .....Postp.
31.03.99 .....Lithuania-Estonia 1-2
31.03.99 .....Scotland-Czech Republic 1-2
05.06.99 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Lithuania
05.06.99 .....Estonia-Czech Republic
05.06.99 .....Faroe Islands-Scotland
09.06.99 .....Estonia-Lithuania
09.06.99 .....Faroe Islands-Bosnia-Herzegovina
09.06.99 .....Czech Republic-Scotland
18.08.99 .....Scotland-Bosnia-Herzegovina
04.09.99 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Scotland
04.09.99 .....Faroe Islands-Estonia
04.09.99 .....Lithuania-Czech Republic
08.09.99 .....Czech Republic-Bosnia-Herzegovina
08.09.99 .....Faroe Islands-Lithuania
08.09.99 .....Estonia-Scotland
09.10.99 .....Estonia-Bosnia-Herzegovina
09.10.99 .....Czech Republic-Faroe Islands
09.10.99 .....Scotland-Lithuania

GROUP 9

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Czech Rep	5	5	0	0	12	3	15
Estonia	5	2	1	2	11	9	7
Scotland	4	2	1	1	6	5	7
Lithuania	5	1	2	2	5	6	5
Bosnia-Herz	4	1	1	2	5	8	4
Faroe Islands	5	0	1	4	1	9	1

EUROPE

AUSTRIA

Tuesday, March 30

Sturm Graz 0
Grazer AK 1 (Pamic pen 32) Att: 15,400

Wednesday, March 31

Austria Wien 1 (Mayrleb 75)
FC Tirol 1 (Hortnagel 10) Att: 5,000

Linz ASK 2 (Pawlowksi 17, Weissenberger 70)
Lustenau 0 Att: 5,000

Salzburg 1 (Glieder pen 56)
Vorwarts Steyr 0 Att: 7,000

SV Ried 0
Rapid 0 Att: 5,000

Saturday, April 3

Grazer AK 1 (Akwuegbu 47)
SV Ried 0 Att: 5,000

FC Tirol 3 (Vacha 52, Jezek 69, 82)
Sturm Graz 1 (Vastic 26) Att: 6,000

Lustenau 0
Austria Wien 0 Att: 10,000

Rapid 1 (Penksa 74)
Salzburg 1 (Kitzbichler 49) Att: 9,000

Vorwarts Steyr 1 (Schneidhofer 64)
Linz ASK 1 (Stumpf 46) Att: 4,000

Friday, April 9

Sturm Graz 5 (Schopp 23, Haas 28, Vastic pen 32, Neukirchner 43, 58)
Lustenau 2 (Regtop 62, Kristo 90) Att: 9,000

Saturday, April 10

Salzburg 3 (Aigner 15, Lipscei 41, Sabitzer 70)
Grazer AK 0 Att: 8,000

SV Ried 2 (Strafner 65, Glasner 90)
FC Tirol 0 Att: 4,000

Vorwarts Steyr 3 (Datoru 54, Grubor 65, Zovko 73)
Rapid 3 (Braun 7, Vier 9, Wimmer 26) Att: 5,000

Sunday, April 11

Austria Wien 2 (Streiter 41, Plassnegger 86)
Linz ASK 0 Att: 4,000

Wednesday, April 14

Lustenau 1 (Kristo 84)
Sturm Graz 2 (Reinmayr 41, Vastic 57) Att: 4,000

Grazer AK 1 (Golombek 72)
Salzburg 4 (Amerhauser 8, Kitzbichler 27, Glieder 39, Sabitzer 75) Att: 6,000

Linz ASK 0
Austria Wien 0 Att: 4,000

Rapid Wien 2 (Purk 50, Vier 58)
Vorwarts Steyr 1 (Metlitsky 76) Att: 5,000

FC Tirol 1 (Baur 90)
SV Ried 0 Att: 3,000

Saturday, April 17

Salzburg 2 (Glieder 45, Koejoe 84)
FC Tirol 2 (Scharrer 8, Kirchler 60) Att: 12,000

Rapid Wien 2 (Purk 22, Wagner 80)
Linz ASK 0 Att: 5,000

SV Ried 1 (Strafner 14)
Lustenau 0 Att: 3,000

Vorwarts Steyr 0
Grazer AK 3 (Drechsel 25, Lipa 40, Sopko 48 og) Att: 4,000

Sturm Graz 0
Austria Wien 0 Att: 11,000

AUSTRIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rapid Wien	29	17	9	3	46	21	60
Sturm Graz	29	18	3	8	56	26	57
Grazer AK	29	16	5	8	36	24	53
Salzburg	29	12	9	8	45	35	45
Linz ASK	29	13	6	10	39	33	45
Austria Wien	29	10	10	9	31	32	40
FC Tirol	29	10	9	10	32	36	39
SV Ried	28	7	6	15	23	32	27
Lustenau	28	3	9	16	21	51	18
Vorwarts Steyr	29	2	6	21	24	63	9

AUSTRIAN CUP – QTR-FINALS

Apr 6: Lustenau 0 Linz ASK 1; SV Braunau 0 SV Ried 1; Grazer AK 1 Sturm Graz 2; Rapid Wien 4 Salzburg 1.

BELGIUM

Friday, April 2

Anderlecht 1 (Scifo pen 86)
Lokeren 1 (Koller 26) Att: 22,000

Saturday, April 3

Beveren 1 (Ma. Zewlakow 77)
Charleroi 2 (Teklak 57, Remy 90) Att: 3,000

Club Brugge 1 (Vermant pen 63)
Gent 0 Att: 16,000

Ekeren 0
Standard 1 (Mornar 77) Att: 4,000

Harelbeke 5 (Mytchkov 10, 84, L Kubik 16, Wostijn 45, Paas 87)
Eendracht Aalst 1 (Cosimo 90) Att: 4,500

Lommel 0
Lierse 0 Att: 4,000

Mouscron 3 (Vidovic 65, 90, Tanghe 69)
Kortrijk 1 (Keita 49) Att: 8,000

St Truiden 5 (Isaias 31, Fiers 54, Teppers pen 66, Rudonja 76, 84)
Ostende 0 Att: 5,000

Westerlo 1 (Mitrovic 66)
Genk 1 (N'Sumbu 68) Att: 10,000

Friday, April 9

Charleroi 0
Anderlecht 2 (Radzinski 27, Goor 54) Att: 13,000

Sunday, April 11

St Triuden 2 (Rudonja 46, 63)
Kortrijk 2 (Keita 69, Demkine 90) Att: 5,500

Saturday, April 17

Charleroi 1 (D. Brogno 39)
Mouscron 3 (Ban 421, Martic 44, Ban 73) Att: 7,000

Eendracht Aalst 0
Beveren 1 (Ma Zewlakow 13) Att: 4,500

Gent 1 (C. Roussel 89)
Germinal Ekeren 3 (Van Ankeren 38, Severeyns 62, Barthoomeeusen 90) Att: 6,200

Lierse 0
Anderlecht 0 Att: 12,000

Lokeren 1 (Van Geneugden 88)
Harlebeke 0 Att: 3,000

Standard 2 (M. Mpenza 65, 72)
St Truiden 0 Att: 19,000

Sunday, April 18

Genk 1 (Jankauskas 52)
Club Brugge 1 (Origi 66) Att: 17,000

Kortrijk 4 (Demkine pen 39, Van Bristom 53, Smeets pen 56, Meert 74)
Westerlo 2 (Janssen 23, Ferreira 82) Att: 3,500

Oostende 1 (Van Kellel og 19)
Lommel 1 (Eshun 64) Att: 1,500

BELGIUM

	P	W	L	D	F	A	Pts
Genk	29	18	7	4	61	31	61
Club Brugge	29	18	5	6	52	31	59
Mouscron	29	16	7	6	67	44	55
Anderlecht	29	16	7	6	55	36	55
Standard	29	17	2	10	52	30	53
Lokeren	29	14	6	9	54	49	48
St Truiden	30	13	8	9	48	39	47
Gent	29	13	8	8	49	51	47
Lierse	29	13	6	10	57	40	45
Germinal	29	12	6	11	42	40	42
Harelbeke	29	9	9	11	39	41	36
Westerlo	29	10	5	14	50	54	35
Aalst	29	8	7	14	39	52	31
Charleroi	29	6	11	12	36	46	29
Beveren	29	6	5	18	28	54	23
Kortrijk	30	5	7	18	43	72	22
Lommel	29	5	6	18	25	46	21
Ostende	29	2	10	17	24	65	16

BELGIAN CUP – SEMI-FINALS

1st legs
Apr 9: Genk 2 Lierse 4.
Apr 11: Lokeren 0 Standard 2.

LEAGUE CUP – QUARTER-FINALS

Mar 24: Anderlecht 3 Lierse 1; Lommel 1 St Truiden 3; Beveren 3 Ekeren 3 (aet) *Ekeren won on pens*; Genk 2 Club Brugge 2 (aet) *Genk won on pens.*

LEAGUE CUP - SEMI-FINAL

Apr 13: Germinal Ekeren 3 Anderlecht 2

BULGARIA

Apr 3: Shumen 2 CSKA 5; Lok Plovdiv 3 Dobrudzha 1; Septemvri 1 Spartak Varna 1; Metalurg 1 Litex 2; Lev Kjustendil 2 Minjor 1; Lok Sofia 2 Botev 0; Pirin 1 Neftohimik 1; Lev Sofia 1 Slavia 0.
Apr 7: Dobrudzha 3 Slavia 1; Botev 5 Shumen 2; CSKA 3 Pirin 0; Neftohimik 3 Lev Kjustendil 1; Minjor 3 Metalurg 4; Litex 4 Septemvri 1; Spartak Varna 2 Lok Plovdiv 0; Lok Sofia 0 Lev Sofia 1.
Apr 10: Lev Sofia 2 Dobrudzha 0; Slavia 2 Spartak Varna 2; Lok Plovdiv 1 Litex 4; Septemvri 2 Minjor 3; Pirin 3 Botev 0; Shumen 2 Lok Sofia 0; Metalurg 0 Neftohimik 0.
Apr 11: Lev Kjustendil 0 CSKA 0.
Apr 17: Neftohimik 1 Septemvri 3; Lok Sofia 4 Pirin 1; Minjor 2 Lok Plovdiv 0; Spartak Varna 1 Dobrudzha 2; Botev 2 Lev Kjustendil 2; Shumen 0 Lev Sofia 1; CSKA 0 Metalurg 2.
Apr 18: Litex 3 Slavia 1.

BULGARIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Litex	23	18	3	2	67	17	57
Lev Sofia	23	17	4	2	44	11	55
Lev Kjustendil	23	13	3	7	43	22	41
Lok Sofia	23	12	3	8	31	23	39
Slavia	23	10	7	6	38	24	37
Neftohimik	23	11	4	8	37	26	37
CSKA	23	10	6	7	35	32	35
Minjor	23	9	6	8	33	33	33
Spartak Varna	23	9	3	11	31	36	30
Metalurg	23	9	2	12	25	33	29
Dobrudzha	23	8	3	12	30	39	27
Botev	23	6	5	12	25	41	23
Shumen	23	5	7	11	23	41	22
Pirin	23	6	4	13	21	46	22
Lok Plovdiv	23	3	5	15	18	47	14
Septemvri	23	3	5	15	23	53	14

CROATIA

CROATIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Croatia	21	16	2	3	41	14	50
Rijeka	21	16	1	4	33	17	49
Hajduk	22	12	6	4	38	17	42
Osijek	22	11	3	8	37	23	36
Varteks	22	8	4	10	37	34	28
Hrvatski drag	22	6	7	9	17	23	25
Sibenik	22	7	3	12	27	45	24
Cibalia	22	6	5	11	22	29	23
Zagreb	21	5	8	8	27	35	23
Slaven	22	5	7	10	22	34	22
Zadarkomerc	22	5	6	11	27	40	21
Mladost 127	21	5	4	12	22	39	19

CZECH REPUBLIC

Apr 4: Ostrava 1 Olomouc 1; Dukla 1 Brno 1; Chmel Blsany 2 Zizkov 0; Teplice 1 Jablonec 2; Liberec 1 Kralove 1; Opava 1 Plzen 1; Drnovice 1 Karvina 1.
Apr 5: Slavia 1 Sparta 0.
Apr 11: Olomouc 0 Drnovice 1; Karvina 2 Opava 1; Plzen 1 Liberec 2; Sparta 2 Teplice 0; Jablonec 1 Chmel Blsany 0; Zizkov 1 Dukla 1; Brno 3 Ostrava 0.
Apr 12: Kralove 0 Slavia 2.
Apr 18: Brno 0 Olomouc 0; Dukla 1 Jablonec 1; Teplice 4 Hradec 0; Liberec 3 Karvina 1; Opava 4 Drnovice 0.
Apr 19: Ostrava 2 Zizkov 1; Slavia 1 Plzen 1; Chmel Blsany 1 Sparta 1.

CZECH REP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sparta	23	13	8	2	44	15	47
Teplice	23	11	6	6	42	27	39
Slavia	22	10	9	3	31	19	39
Olomouc	23	9	9	5	29	25	36
Drnovice	23	9	8	6	30	30	35
Chmel Blsany	23	10	3	10	35	32	33
Ostrava	23	6	13	4	28	21	31
Brno	23	8	7	8	27	24	31
Opava	23	8	6	9	37	38	30
Liberec	23	7	9	7	25	26	30
Hradec	23	8	5	10	28	31	29
Jablonec	22	6	7	9	23	30	25
Zizkov	23	7	4	12	22	38	25
Dukla	23	5	8	10	19	28	23
Plzen	23	5	6	12	18	35	21
Karvina	23	5	4	14	20	39	19

DENMARK

Mar 22: Silkeborg 1 Brondby 2.
Mar 29: Lyngby 1 AaB 1.
Apr 1: AB 0 AaB 1; Aarhus Fremad 0 Herfolge 1; Brondby 4 AGF 1; FC Copenhagen 2 Lyngby 0; Vejle 4 Silkeborg 1; Viborg 5 B93 1.
Apr 5: AGF 2 Vejle 1; AaB 3 Aarhus Fremad 2; B93 0 AB 1; Herfolge 1 Brondby 2; Lyngby 3 Viborg 1; Silkeborg 2 FC Copenhagen 2.
Apr 9: FC Copenhagen 1 AGF 1.
Apr 11: AB 1 Viborg1; Aarhus Fremad 2 B93 0; Silkeborg 1 Lyngby 1; Vejle 1 Herfolge 1.
Apr 12: Brondby 1 AaB 2.
Apr 14: AGF 0 Viborg 0.
Apr 18: AB 2 Vejle 0; Aarhus Fremad 1 Brondby 3; B93 0 Silkeborg 1; Herfolge 0 Lyngby 2; Viborg 1 FC Copenhagen 0.
Apr 19: AaB 2 AGF 1.

DENMARK

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AB	23	14	5	4	37	16	47
AaB	23	12	9	2	48	27	45
Brondby	23	14	2	7	52	26	44
Lyngby	23	10	6	7	33	39	36
FC Copenhagen	23	9	8	6	42	36	35
Vejle	23	9	4	10	36	34	31
Silkeborg	23	7	10	6	34	35	31
Herfolge	23	7	9	7	27	24	30
AGF	23	7	7	9	28	38	28
Viborg	23	7	4	12	39	44	25
Aarhus Fremad	23	4	5	14	33	49	17
B93	23	2	3	18	14	55	9

DANISH CUP

SEMI-FINALS, 1ST LEGS

Apr 8: Brondby 1 AB 1; Silkeborg 4 AaB 4.

ENGLAND

Friday, April 2

Aston Villa 0
West Ham 0 Att: 36,814

Saturday, April 3

Blackburn 0
Middlesbrough 0 Att: 27,482

Charlton 0
Chelsea 1 (Di Matteo 11) Att: 20,046

Derby 3 (Burton 8, Baiano pen 22, Wanchope 90)
Newcastle 4 (Speed 11, 24, Ketsbaia 39, Solano 60) Att: 32,039

Leeds 3 (Hasselbaink 43, Harte 60, Smith 84)
Nottm Forest 1 (Rogers 53) Att: 39,645

Liverpool 3 (Fowler pen 15, 21, Berger 82)
Everton 2 (Dacourt 1, Jeffers 84) Att: 44,852

Sheffield Wed 1 (Rudi 51)
Coventry 2 (McAllister pen 19, Whelan 84) Att: 28,136

Southampton 0
Arsenal 0 Att: 15,255

Tottenham 0
Leicester 2 (Elliott 43, Cottee 67) Att: 35,415

Wimbledon 1 (Euell 5)
Man Utd 1 (Beckham 44) Att: 26,121

Monday, April 5

Coventry 1 (Boateng 64)
Southampton 0 Att: 21,402

Everton 1 (Jeffers 12)
Sheffield Wed 2 (Carbone 52, 68) Att: 35,270

Middlesbrough 3 (Ricard 1, 29, Festa 8)
Wimbledon 1 (Cort 75) Att: 33,999

Newcastle 1 (Ketsbaia 78)
Tottenham 1 (Anderton pen 50) Att: 36,655

Nottm Forest 2 (Freedman 60, Van Hooijdonk 90)
Liverpool 2 (Redknapp 15, Owen 72) Att: 28,374

West Ham 0
Charlton 1 (Stuart 75) Att: 26,041

Tuesday, April 6

Arsenal 1 (Bergkamp 42)
Blackburn 0 Att: 37,762

Leicester 2 (Savage 63, Cottee 71)
Aston Villa 2 (Hendrie 2, Joachim 49) Att: 20,652

Saturday, April 10

Aston Villa 3 (Draper 13, Joachim 66, Dublin 89)
Southampton 0 Att: 32,203

Derby 1 (Carbonari 85)
Nottm Forest 0 Att: 32,217

Leicester 0
West Ham 0 Att: 20,402

Middlesbrough 2 (Ricard 35, Mustoe 60)
Charlton 0 Att: 34,529

Sunday, April 11

Everton 2 (Campbell 29, 88)
Coventry 0 Att: 32,341

Wimbledon 1 (Gayle 90)
Chelsea 2 (Flo 24, Poyet 53) Att: 21,577

Monday, April 12

Leeds 0
Liverpool 0 Att: 39,451

Wednesday, April 14

Middlesbrough 0
Chelsea 0 Att: 34,406

Saturday, April 17

Charlton 1 (Stuart 20)
Leeds 1 (Woodgate 24) Att: 20,043

Coventry 1 (McAllister 72)
Middlesbrough 2 (Kinder 64, Gordon 82) Att: 19,231

Liverpool 0
Aston Villa 1 (Taylor 33) Att: 44,306

Man Utd 3 (Solskjaer 35, Sheringham 44, Scholes 62)
Sheffield Wed 0 Att: 55,270

Newcastle 1 (Shearer pen 82)
Everton 3 (Campbell 1, 44, Gemmill 88) Att: 36,775

Nottm Forest 0
Tottenham 1 (Iversen 62) Att: 25,181

Southampton 3 (Marsden 22, M. Hughes 61, Pahars 85)
Blackburn 3 (Ward 14, Peacock 25, Wilcox 47) Att: 15,209

West Ham 5 (Di Canio 19, Berkovitch 28, Wright 55, Rudduck 64, Sinclair 68)
Derby 1 (Wanchope 79) Att: 25,485

Sunday, April 18

Chelsea 2 (Zola 30, Petrescu 69)
Leicester 2 (Duberry og 82, Guppy 88) Att: 34,353

Monday, April 19

Arsenal 5 (Parlour 35, Vieira 50, Thatcher 57 og, Bergkamp 57, Kanu 59)
Wimbledon 1 (Cort 70)

Tuesday, April 20

Charlton 1 (Kinsella 5)
Tottenham 4 (Iversen 57, Campbell 79, Dominguez 89, Ginola 90) Att: 20,043

Wednesday, April 21

Liverpool 0
Leicester 1 (Marshall 90) Att: 36,019

Sheffield Wed 1 (Scott 52)
Newcastle 1 (Shearer pen 45) Att: 21,545

ENGLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man Utd	32	19	10	3	72	32	67
Arsenal	33	18	12	3	48	14	66
Chelsea	33	17	13	3	49	26	64
Leeds	33	16	11	6	53	29	59
Aston Villa	34	14	10	10	45	39	52
West Ham	34	14	9	11	39	41	51
Middlesbrough	34	12	14	8	46	42	50
Derby	33	12	11	10	37	41	47
Tottenham	33	11	13	9	40	38	46
Liverpool	33	12	8	13	57	43	44
Newcastle	34	11	10	13	45	49	43
Leicester	33	10	13	10	35	41	43
Wimbledon	34	10	11	13	38	55	41
Sheff Wed	34	11	6	17	39	40	39
Everton	34	9	10	15	31	41	37
Coventry	34	10	7	17	35	47	37
Blackburn	33	7	11	15	35	46	32
Charlton	34	7	11	16	36	48	32
Southampton	34	8	7	19	31	63	31
Nottm Forest	34	4	9	21	30	66	21

FA CUP – SEMI-FINALS

Apr 11: Man Utd 0 Arsenal 0 (aet); Newcastle 2 Tottenham 0 (aet).

FA CUP - SEMI-FINAL - REPLAY

Apr 14: Arsenal 1 Man Utd 2

FRANCE

Friday, April 2

Monaco 1 (Ikpeba 28)
Marseille 2 (Camara 15, Ravanelli 48) Att: 17,000

Sochaux 0
Rennes 3 (Bigne 5, Nonda 51, Le Roux pen 54) Att: 10,000

Saturday, April 3

Lens 0
Le Havre 1 (Pouget 5) Att: 33,000

Lorient 3 (Loko 12, Pedron 51, Camadini 84)
Bastia 1 (Perez 39) Att: 12,000

Lyon 2 (Toyes og 68, Violeau pen 90)
Metz 0 Att: 25,000

Nancy 1 (Correa 47)
Strasbourg 1 (Echouafni 82) Att: 10,417

Nantes 2 (Da Rocha 30, Monterrubio pen 72)
Auxerre 2 (Deniaud 64, Jeunechamp 85) Att: 18,000

Paris SG 0
Montpellier 1 (Ouedec 76) Att: 33,000

Toulouse 0
Bordeaux 3 (Laslandes 24, Ivan 79, Micoud 90) Att: 35,000

Thursday, April 8

Lyon 4 (Caveglia 41, 45, Cocard 75, Linares 84)
Sochaux 1 (B Bouger pen 76) Att: 20,000

Friday, April 9

Nancy 1 (Wiart 43)
Metz 0 Att: 18,000

Tuesday, April 13

Marseille 4 (Da Silva 30, Gourvennec 57, Ravanelli 62, Maurice 81)
Nancy 0 Att: 20,000

Wednesday, April 14

Bastia 1 (Perez 33)
Sochaux 1 (Dallet 77) Att: 5,000

Rennes 2 (Nonda 11, Gousse 78)
Lens 0 Att: 15,000

Auxerre 0
Monaco 3 (Giuly 60, 72, Ikpeba 84) Att: 15,000

Bordeaux 0
Lorient 0 Att: 25,000

Le Havre 2 (Weber 57, Boumsong 74)
Nantes 1 (Da Rocha 3) Att: 9,000

Metz 1 (Jestrovic 58)
Paris SG 1 (Algerino 23) Att: 13,000

Montpellier 1 (Delaye 73)
Lyon 3 (Caveglia 32, pen 84, Bassila 90) Att: 12,000

Strasbourg 2 (Bertin pen 75, Martins 83)
Toulouse 0 Att: 15,000

FRANCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Marseille	29	19	7	3	53	22	64
Bordeaux	29	19	6	4	58	22	63
Lyon	29	16	8	5	45	25	56
Rennes	29	14	8	7	39	32	50
Monaco	29	14	7	8	45	29	49
Nantes	29	10	11	8	36	30	41
Lens	29	12	5	12	35	36	41
Montpellier	29	10	7	12	45	44	37
PSG	29	8	9	12	25	27	33
Strasbourg	29	7	12	10	24	29	33
Bastia	29	9	6	14	33	39	33
Auxerre	29	8	8	13	36	40	32
Le Havre	28	8	8	12	21	31	32
Metz	29	7	10	12	24	35	31
Nancy	29	8	7	14	28	41	31
Lorient	29	6	11	12	25	43	29
Toulouse	29	5	11	13	19	41	26
Sochaux	28	3	13	12	22	47	22

FRENCH CUP – QUARTER-FINALS

Apr 10: Le Mans 3 Laval 1; Nantes 2 Guingamp 0; Angouleme 0 Nimes 2; Rouen 0 Sedan 2.

LEAGUE CUP - SEMI-FINAL

Apr 17: Lens 2 Sochaux 0; Metz 4 Montpellier 3

GERMANY

Saturday, April 3

Dortmund 2 (Herrlich 14, 32)
Bayern Munich 2 (Zickler 48, Jancker 63) Att: 69,000

Hamburg 2 (Yeboah 40, 48)
Freiburg 1 (Weisshaupt 13) Att: 22,668

Kaiserslautern 0
Bayer Leverkusen 1 (Kirsten 42) Att: 41,500

Munich 1860 1 (Hobsch 66)
Nurnberg 2 (Kuka 7, Storzenhofecker 73) Att: 50,400

Schalke 2 (Buskens 60, De Kock 83)
Wolfsburg 0 Att: 43,700

Stuttgart 0
Duisburg 0 Att: 24,500

Werder Bremen 0
Hansa Rostock 3 (Agali 26, Lange 43, Neuville 50) Att: 28,486

Sunday, April 4

Borussia MG 2 (Witeczek 53, 59)
Hertha 4 (Preetz 34, pen 71, Thom 66, Sverrison 77) Att: 31,000

Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Fjortoft 86)
Bochum 0 Att: 32,200

Friday, April 9

Duisburg 2 (Osthoff 6, Hajto 7)
Hamburg 3 (Groth 57, Dembinski 63, 75) Att: 17,170

Freiburg 0
Werder Bremen 2 (Frings 51, Bogdanovic 81) Att: 22,500

Saturday, April 10

Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Kirsten 25, 29)
Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Zampach 63) Att: 22,500

Bayern Munich 1 (Zickler 49)
Schalke 1 (Held 62) Att: 63,000

Hansa Rostock 2 (Neuville 60, Agali 78)
Dortmund 0 Att: 21,500

Hertha 2 (Aracic 57, Neuendorf 74)
Stuttgart 0 Att: 57,849

Nurnberg 2 (Ziemer 40, Oechler 78)
Borussia MG 0 Att: 43,500

Wolfsburg 2 (Prager 42, 70)
Kaiserslautern 1 (Ballack pen 75) Att: 18,000

Sunday, April 11

Bochum 2 (Buckley 56, Zeyer 90)
Munich 1860 0 Att: 20,395

Tuesday, April 13

Eintracht Frankfurt 0
Wolfsburg 1 (Schur og 5) Att: 17,300

Kaiserslautern 2 (Buck 29, Rische 43)
Bayern Munich 1 (Daei 5) Att: 41,500

Schalke 1 (Wolf 76)
Hansa Rostock 0 Att: 33,160

Stuttgart 0 Nurnberg 0 Att: 21,000

Werder Bremen 0 Hamburg 0 Att: 34,486

Wednesday, April 14

Borussia Dortmund 2 (Barbarez 45, Ricken 76)
Freiburg 1 (Gunes 18) Att: 61,000

Borussia MG 2 (Asanin 65, Passlack 89)
Bochum 2 (Peschel 76, Mahdavikia 90) Att: 16,000

Hertha 1 (Preetz 70)
Duisburg 3 (Wolters 18, Van Burik og 50, Webau 79) Att: 40,242

1860 Munich 0
Leverkusen 2 (Emerson 46, Ze Roberto 62) Att: 21,000

Friday, April 16

Bayern Munich 3 (Salihamidzic 26, Zickler 34, Strunz 72)
Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Fjortoft 80) Att: 46,000

Hansa Rostock 2 (Neuville 42, Ehlers 59)
Kaiserslautern 1 (Rosler 89) Att: 16,500

Saturday, April 17

Bayer Leverkusen 4 (Kirsten 14, 54, 67, Ramelow 78)
Borussia MG 1 (Pettersson 65) Att: 22,500

Bochum 3 (Mahdavikia pen 62, Michalke 76, Buckley 80)
Stuttgart 3 (Akpoborie 42, 45, 53) Att: 21,283

Duisburg 2 (Hajto pen 8, Osthoff 59)
Werder Bremen 0 Att: 16,176

Freiburg 0
Schalke 2 (Alpugan 69, Wolf 84) Att: 22,500

Nurnberg 0 Hertha 0 Att: 33,000

Wolfsburg 1 (Nowak 76)
1860 Munich 0 Att: 15,909

Sunday April 18

Hamburg 0
Borussia Dortmund 0 Att: 25,437

GERMANY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bayern Munich	27	20	4	3	62	19	64
Leverkusen	27	15	9	3	53	23	54
Kaiserslautern	27	14	6	7	41	37	48
Hertha	27	13	6	8	40	27	45
Wolfsburg	27	12	9	6	44	33	45
Dortmund	27	12	8	7	37	26	44
1860 Munich	27	10	7	10	39	37	37
Duisburg	27	9	9	9	34	37	36
Hamburg	27	9	9	9	30	34	36
Schalke	27	8	10	9	30	38	34
Stuttgart	27	7	12	8	34	35	33
Werder Bremen	27	7	8	12	31	36	29
Bochum	27	7	8	12	35	45	29
Nurnberg	27	5	13	9	30	42	28
Freiburg	27	6	9	12	27	35	27
Hansa Rostock	27	6	8	13	35	49	26
Frankfurt	27	5	8	14	28	44	23
Borussia MG	27	3	7	17	29	62	16

GREECE

Mar 22: Olympiakos 4 Ethnikos A 2; Veroia 3 Panionios 1.
Apr 3: Panionios 0 Panathinaikos 2.
Apr 4: OFI 3 Veroia 0; Ethnikos P 0 Kavala 2; Paniliakos 2 Eleysina 0; Iraklis 2 Aris 1; Proodeftiki 0 Apollon 1; Xanthi 2 Ionikos 2; Ethnikos A 2 AEK 3; Olympiakos 2 PAOK 1.
Apr 17: Apollon 2 Ethnikos A 2.
Apr 18: OFI 2 Panionios 0; Veroia 0 Paniliakos 0; Kavala 2 Iraklis 0; Eleysina 0 Proodeftiki 1; Aris 1 Xanthi 2; Ionikos 1 Olympiakos 3; AEK 2 PAOK 0.

GREECE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olympiakos	26	21	2	3	67	19	65
AEK	26	19	4	3	59	20	61
Panathinaikos	25	17	2	6	47	28	53
PAOK	26	13	5	8	30	24	44
Xanthi	26	12	7	7	31	24	43
Aris	26	13	3	10	38	36	42
OFI	26	13	2	11	39	31	41
Ionikos	26	11	7	8	47	32	40
Iraklis	26	11	6	9	37	26	39
Kavala	26	10	6	10	40	47	36
Ethnikos A	26	10	3	13	32	44	33
Paniliakos	26	8	5	13	29	41	29
Apollon	26	7	8	11	33	47	29
Eleysina	26	5	10	11	19	34	25
Panionios	26	7	3	16	34	43	24
Proodeftiki	26	6	6	14	19	31	24
Veroia	26	4	5	17	15	44	17
Ethnikos P	25	0	8	17	13	58	8

GREEK CUP

SEMI-FINALS, 1ST LEGS

Panathinaikos 6 Athinaikos 1; Olympiakos 4 Iraklis 0.

HOLLAND

Saturday, March 27

De Graafschap 3 (Viscaal 6, 90, Godee pen 88)
MVV 1 (Taiwo 85) Att: 9,100

Thursday, April 1

MVV 0
Roda JC 0 Att: 6,000

Friday, April 2

AZ 0
Feyenoord 2 (Cruz 45, 73) Att: 10,560

Fortuna 1 (Jeffrey 80)
Heerenveen 0 Att: 7,300

NEC 1 (Maes pen 12)
Cambuur 0 Att: 4,000

Sparta 2 (Tammer 11, El Khattabi 62)
De Graafschap 3 (De Turk 41, Gerritsen 50, Rzasa 88) Att: 5,000

Saturday, April 3

Waalwijk 0
Vitesse 2 (Kreek 28, 44) Att: 6,200

Sunday, April 4

NAC 2 (Milicic 13, A Arveladze 62)
Willem II 2 (Ceesay 23, Bombarda 44) Att: 9,900

PSV 3 (Nilis 47, 68, Van Nistelrooy 65)
Ajax 1 (McCarthy 14) Att: 30,000

Monday, April 5

Feyenoord 1 (Tomasson 14)
Sparta 0 Att: 41,659

Twente 1 (Oude Kamphuis 11)
Utrecht 1 (Mghizrat 57) Att: 12,500

Tuesday, April 6

Cambuur 1 (Berhalter 89)
Roda JC 1 (Torma 70) Att: 7,600

Wednesday, April 7

Fortuna 1 (Hamming 30)
Willem II 2 (Galasek 60, Abdellaoui 67) Att: 6,300

Friday, April 9

MVV 1 (Vriesde 62)
PSV 1 (Van Nistelrooy 13) Att: 7,500

Sparta 0
Waalwijk 1 (Van Arum 69) Att: 3,500

Saturday, April 10

De Graafschap 0 Fortuna 0 Att: 8,750

Heerenveen 3 (G de Nooijer 61, Talan 86, Tzvetkov 87)
NEC 2 (De Gier 53, De Romijn 63) Att: 13,600

NAC 0 Roda JC 0 Att: 9,500

Vitesse 1 (Jochemsen 32)
Twente 1 (Vennegoor of Hesselink 63) Att: 24,500

Willem II 2 (Bombarda 18, Schulp 60)
AZ 0 Att: 14,140

Sunday, April 11

Cambuur 4 (Durmusoglu 23, 35, Levtsjenko 80, Van Utrecht 85)
Ajax 1 (S Arveladze 6) Att: 10,500

Feyenoord 4 (Tomasson 27, 50, Bosvelt 40, 79)
Utrecht 2 (Mols 16, 20) Att: 36,202

Friday, April 16

Vitesse 1 (Zongo 26)
Heerenveen 2 (Hansma 19, G. de Nooijer 82) Att: 25,000

Saturday, April 17

AZ 1 (Obiku 73)
De Graafschap 3 (Gerritsen 32, Emam 37, Viscaal 63) Att: 7,150

Twente 0 Cambuur 0 Att: 12,000

MVV 1 (Volmer 66)
Sparta 1 (Wouden 90) Att: 6,000

PSV 2 (Van Nistelrooy pen 31, Nilis 73)
NEC 0 Att: 28,000

Sunday, April 18

Utrecht 1 (Mols 44)
RKC 1 (Hoogendorp 24) Att: 13,500

NAC 0
Feyenoord 1 (Tomasson 38) Att: 11,500

Ajax 1 (Litmanen 82)
Fortuna 3 (Simons 70, 90, Van Bommel 72) Att: 35,432

Tuesday, April 20

Vitesse 3 (Kreek 9, Reuser 26, 90)
PSV 3 (Van Niistelrooy 7, Nilis 68, 90) Att: 26,200

Wednesday, April 21

Ajax 3 (Wamberto 24, 80, Gronkjaer 26)
NEC 0 Att: 20,500

HOLLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Feyenoord	28	22	4	2	66	27	70
Vitesse	29	16	7	6	55	36	55
PSV	29	15	9	5	71	43	54
Willem II	29	16	5	8	55	42	53
Heerenveen	29	13	9	7	49	37	48
Ajax	29	13	8	8	59	35	47
Roda JC	28	13	8	7	48	33	47
Twente	29	12	10	7	42	35	46
AZ	29	10	11	8	44	48	41
Fortuna	29	11	7	11	39	41	40
Utrecht	29	9	8	12	50	54	35
NEC	29	8	8	13	35	48	32
De Graafschap	29	7	11	11	34	47	32
Cambuur	29	7	9	13	32	52	30
MVV	29	5	10	14	33	52	25
Waalwijk	29	4	7	18	29	54	19
Sparta	29	5	4	20	28	60	19
NAC Breda	29	3	7	19	27	52	16

HUNGARY

Apr 2: BVSC 2 Vac 1.
Apr 3: Ujpest 1 Gyor 2; Debrecen 2 Zalaegerszeg 0; Siofok 0 Ferencvaros 2; Gazszer 0 Videoton 0; MTK 2 Nyiregyhaza 0; Kerulet 3 Dunaferr 1; Haladas 0 Vasas 0; Kispest Honved 3 Diosgyor 0.
Apr 7: Dunaferr 0 MTK 3; Nyiregyhaza 0 Gazszer 0; Videoton 1 Siofok 1; Ferencvaros 1 BVSC 0; Vac 1 Debrecen 1; Zalaegerszeg 0 Ujpest 1; Kispest Honved 1 Haladas 0; Kerulet 1 Vasas 4; Diosgyor 1 Gyor 1.
Apr 10: Gyor 1 Zalaegerszeg 0; Ujpest 2 Vac 0; Debrecen 6 Ferencvaros 1; BVSC 0 Videoton 1; Gazszer 3 Dunaferr 0; MTK 2 Vasas 0; Haladas 2 Diosgyor 1.
Apr 11: Kerulet 1 Kispest Honved 1.
Apr 12: Siofok 1 Nyiregyhaza 1.
Apr 17: Dunaferr 2 Siofok 1; Nyiregyhaza 1 BVSC 0; Videoton 1 Debrecen 0; Ferencvaros 1 Ujpest 0; Haladas 5 Kerulet 1; Kispest Honved 0 MTK 2; Vasas 2 Gazszer 0.
Apr 18: Vac 1 Gyor 0.
Apr 19: Diosgyor 1 Zalaegerszeg 1.

HUNGARY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
MTK	25	21	2	2	57	15	65
Gyor	25	14	7	4	43	26	49
Ferencvaros	24	13	6	5	44	30	45
Ujpest	25	14	3	8	42	31	45
Dunaferr	25	13	4	8	42	34	43
Zalaegerszeg	25	12	6	7	33	24	42
Diosgyor	25	10	9	6	47	40	39
Vac	25	11	5	9	37	36	38
Vasas	25	10	6	9	35	33	36
Debrecen	25	10	4	11	40	33	34
Gazszer	25	7	9	9	25	28	30
Nyiregyhaza	25	7	8	10	36	42	29
Kispest Honved	25	7	7	11	28	39	28
Haladas	24	7	3	14	24	40	24
Videoton	25	5	7	13	27	39	22
Siofok	25	3	9	13	21	36	18
Kerulet	25	4	5	16	28	63	17
BVSC	25	3	6	16	17	37	15

ITALY

Saturday, April 3

Bari 1 (Masinga 60)
Roma 4 (Di Biagio 13, 55, Cafu 79, Di Francesco 84) Att: 19,847

Empoli 1 (Bianconi 27)
Juventus 0 Att: 12,414

Inter 2 (Ronaldo pen 45, pen 83)
Fiorentina 0 Att: 73,398

Lazio 0
Milan 0 Att: 63,875

Parma 1 (Stanic 18)
Cagliari 1 (Muzzi pen 57) Att: 22,100

Perugia 0
Bologna 0 Att: 16,311

Piacenza 4 (Piovani 14, Inzaghi pen 44, Vierchowod 62, Cristallini 71)
Udinese 3 (Jorgensen 5, Bachini 9, Pierini 36) Att: 9,018

Venezia 0
Salernitana 0 Att: 10,040

Vicenza 1 (Otero 33)
Sampdoria 0 Att: 16,665

Sunday, April 11

Cagliari 1 (Kallon 81)
Udinese 2 (Jorgensen 43, Walem 61) Att: 20,187

Fiorentina 2 (Rui Costa 41, Padalino 72)
Bari 2 (Osmanovski 66, Guerrero 89) Att: 32,010

Juventus 2 (Inzaghi 17, Di Livio 82)
Bologna 2 (Kolyvanov 34, Capioli 52) Att: 45,459

Milan 2 (Maldini 59, Ganz 72)
Parma 1 (Balbo 39) Att: 66,279

Piacenza 2 (Lamacchi 89, Inzaghi 90)
Perugia 0 Att: 9,432

Roma 3 (Delvecchio 13, 43, Totti 90)
Lazio 1 (Vieri 79) Att: 75,560

Salernitana 2 (Di Michele 8, Giampaolo 90)
Inter 0 Att: 34,787

Sampdoria 2 (Montella pen 6, Cate 72)
Venezia 1 (Valtolina 53) Att: 18,929

Vicenza 2 (Negri 51, Otero 73)
Empoli 0 Att: 15,500

Saturday, April 17

Bologna 3 (Simuntenkov 28, Bettarini 62, Kolivanov 76)
Fiorentina 0 Att: 28,522

Lazio 1 (Mancini 56)
Juventus 3 (Henry 34, 64, Amoruso 45) Att: 60,718

Parma 1 (Sensini 43)
Sampdoria 1 (Montella pen 53) Att: 19,423

Sunday, April 18

Bari 0
Salernitana 0 Att: 21,169

Empoli 1 (Fusco 68)
Piacenza 2 (Mazzola 69, Dionigi 88) Att: 9,069

Inter 1 (Ronaldo pen 42)
Vicenza 1 (Beghetto 51) Att: 67,486

Perugia 3 (Tedesco 22, 45, Rapajic 88)
Roma 2 (Matrecano og 23, Di Francesco 39) Att: 18,321

Udinese 1 (Amoroso 57)
Milan 5 (Boban 15, 36, Bierhoff 44, 60, Weah 62) Att: 38,663

Venezia 1 (Recoba 73)
Cagliari 0 Att: 9,745

ITALY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lazio	29	16	8	5	56	29	56
Milan	29	15	10	4	46	31	55
Fiorentina	29	15	6	8	45	33	51
Parma	29	13	10	6	50	31	49
Roma	29	12	9	8	57	40	45
Juventus	29	12	9	8	36	30	45
Udinese	29	13	6	10	42	43	45
Bologna	29	11	10	8	40	33	43
Inter	29	11	7	11	48	40	40
Venezia	29	9	8	12	29	37	35
Perugia	29	10	5	14	37	50	35
Piacenza	29	9	7	13	43	44	34
Cagliari	29	9	6	14	39	42	33
Bari	29	6	15	8	33	41	33
Vicenza	29	7	9	13	21	35	30
Sampdoria	29	7	9	13	30	47	30
Salernitana	29	7	7	15	28	46	28
Empoli	29	4	9	16	23	51	19

COPPA ITALIA - FINAL - 1ST LEG

Wednesday, April 14

Parma 1 (Crespo 15)
Fiorentina 1 (Batistuta 81) Att: 21,038

NORWAY

Apr 10: Molde 4 Tromso 0; Valerenga 1 Bodo/Glimt 1.
Apr 11: Brann 1 Lillestrom 3; Rosenborg 5 Moss 0; Stabaek 5 Skeid 0; Stromsgodset 2 Kongsvinger 1; Viking 1 Odd Grenland 2.
Apr 17: Lillestrom 3 Rosenborg 2.
Apr 18: Bodo/Glimt 3 Stromsgodset 1; Kongsvinger 2 Molde 3; Moss 0 Viking 2; Odd Grenland 3 Stabaek 2; Tromso 5 Brann 0.
Apr 19: Skeid 0 Valerenga 2.

NORWAY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Molde	2	2	0	0	7	2	6
Lillestrom	2	2	0	0	6	3	6
Odd Grenland	2	2	0	0	5	3	6
Bodo/Glimt	2	1	1	0	4	2	4
Valerenga	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Stabaek	2	1	0	1	7	3	3
Rosenborg	2	1	0	1	7	3	3
Tromso	2	1	0	1	5	4	3
Viking	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Stromsgodset	2	1	0	1	3	4	3
Kongsvinger	2	0	0	2	3	5	0
Brann	2	0	0	2	1	8	0
Moss	2	0	0	2	0	7	0
Skeid	2	0	0	2	0	7	0

POLAND

Apr 3: Widzew 1 Katowice 0; Amica 0 Legia 2; R Radzionkow 1 Belchatow 1; Lech 1 Wisla 3; Stomil 1 R Chorzow 0; Zaglebie 2 LKS 2; Polonia 1 Gornik 0; Odra 3 Pogon 0.
Apr 10: Odra 2 Widzew 0; Pogon 1 Polonia 0; Gornik 2 Zaglebie 2; LKS 2 Stomil 0; R Chorzow 2 Lech 1; Belchatow 1 Amica 1; Legia 0 Katowice 0.
Apr 11: Wisla 6 R Radzionkow 0.
Apr 17: Katowice 1 Belchatow1; R Radzionkow 1 R Chorzow 0; Lech 3 LKS 1; Zaglebie 2 Pogon 0; Polonia 2 Odra 1.
Apr 18: Widzew 3 Legia 2; Amica 1 Wisla 3; Stomil 2 Gornik 1.

POLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wisla	22	19	1	2	57	16	58
Lech	22	14	1	7	45	24	43
Widzew	22	14	1	7	39	26	43
Legia	22	10	8	4	27	18	38
Polonia	22	10	6	6	33	24	36
Gornik	22	8	7	7	27	23	31
R Radzionkow	22	7	7	8	28	28	28
Zaglebie	22	6	8	8	32	35	26
Belchatow	22	7	5	10	23	34	26
Amica	22	7	4	11	27	35	25
Odra	22	6	6	10	26	31	24
LKS	22	5	8	9	23	32	23
Stomil	22	7	2	13	19	32	23
R Chorzow	22	6	5	11	16	32	23
Pogon	22	6	4	12	24	40	22
Katowice	22	5	5	12	18	34	20

PORTUGAL

Friday, April 2

Estrela Amadora 1 (Kenedy 44)
Maritimo 0

Saturday, April 3

Academica 0
Alverca 5 (Nandinho 8, Caju 34, 89, Maniche pen 75, Rui Borges 84)

Benfica 5 (Charles 65, Saunders 71, Ronaldo 82, Nuno Gomes pen 86, 90)
Salgueiros 0

Campomaiorense 4 (Demetrios 18, 78, Vitor Manuel 36, Isaias 41)
Beira Mar 1 (Fary 46)

Chaves 1 (Seba pen 73)
Boavista 1 (Mario Silva 88)

Rio Ave 2 (Jacare 36, 74)
Farense 2 (Hajry 60, Gouveia 76)

Sporting Lisbon 3 (Vinicius 7, Delfim 11, Acosta 42)
Guimaraes 0

Vitoria Setubal 1 (Chiquinho 34)
Uniao Leiria 0

Saturday, April 10

FC Porto 1 (Zahovic 83)
Sporting Braga 0

Friday, April 16

Boavista 3 (Jorge Couto 11, Atelkin 66, 79)
Academica 1 (Rocha 68)

Saturday, April 17

Alverca 3 (Nandinho 27, 34, 66)
Sporting Lisbon 2 (Edmilson pen 10, Quim Berto 60)

Sporting Braga 2 (Toni 7, Odair 87)
Benfica 1 (Paulo Madeira 62)

Farense 2 (Carlos Costa 44, Joao Pinto 54)
Beira Mar 1 (Fary 10)

Guimaraes 3 (Edmilson 56, Geraldo 76, Marcio Theodoro 89)
Estrela Amadora 0

Sunday, April 18

Maritimo 2 (Eusebio 22, Bunbury pen 60)
Rio Ave 0

FC Porto 2 (Quinzinho 13, 47)
Campomaiorense 0

Salgueiros 1 (Gama 86)
Vitoria Setubal 0

Uniao Leiria 3 (Zezinho 5, Reinaldo 65, Duah 67)
Chaves 1 (Seba 56)

PORTUGAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FC Porto	28	20	5	3	64	23	65
Boavista	28	17	9	2	47	22	60
Benfica	28	17	5	6	59	22	56
Sporting Lisbon	28	15	9	4	53	24	54
Uniao Leiria	28	11	8	9	29	23	41
Estrela Amadora	28	10	9	9	29	34	39
Vitoria Setubal	28	10	8	10	28	31	38
Guimaraes	28	10	7	11	43	37	37
Salgueiros	28	7	13	8	36	43	34
Maritimo	28	8	8	12	34	36	32
Farense	28	8	8	12	28	43	32
Alverca	28	7	10	11	29	39	31
Sporting Braga	28	7	10	11	32	46	31
Campomaiorense	28	8	6	14	33	42	30
Rio Ave	28	6	11	11	23	39	29
Beira Mar	28	5	12	11	27	41	27
Chaves	28	5	9	14	35	54	24
Academica	28	4	7	17	27	57	19

PORTUGUESE CUP – 6TH ROUND

Mar 28: Boavista 3 Gil Vicente 2 (aet).

6TH ROUND REPLAY

Mar 28: Uniao Leiria 1 Beira Mar 2.

QUARTER-FINALS

Apr 11: Esponsende 1 Boavista 0; Maritimo 2 Campomaiorense 2 (aet); Moreirense 1 Beira Mar 1 (aet); Torreense 0 Vitoria Setubal 0 (aet).

ROMANIA

Apr 3: Ceahlaul 5 U Cluj 1; Dinamo 5 Olimpia 0; Farul 0 Resita 0; Bacau 2 Onesti 1; Foresta 1 National 0; Gloria 1 Astra 0; Otelul 4 U Craiova 0; Petrolul 3 Arges 1.
Apr 4: Steaua 1 Rapid 1.
Apr 9: Resita 2 Steaua 2.
Apr 10: Astra 0 Dinamo 1; U Craiova 2 Gloria 1; Arges 1 Ceahlaul 0; Onesti 2 Petrolul 0; National 0 Farul 0; Olimpia 0 Foresta 1; Rapid 3 Bacau 0; U Cluj 0 Otelul 2.
Apr 16: Gloria 4 U Cluj 0.
Apr 17: Ceahlaul 3 Onesti 1; Farul 0 Steaua 3; Bacau 2 Resita 0; Foresta 0 Astra 1; National 2 Olimpia 1; Otelul 1 Arges 1; Petrolul 2 Rapid 2.
Apr 18: Dinamo 2 U Craiova 1.

ROMANIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dinamo	24	20	2	2	76	21	62
Rapid	24	18	5	1	52	15	59
Steaua	24	14	6	4	45	22	48
Bacau	24	13	8	3	33	21	47
Otelul	24	14	2	8	38	23	44
Arges	24	13	3	8	40	29	42
National	24	13	1	10	44	32	40
Petrolul	24	11	5	8	38	32	38
Ceahlaul	24	11	3	10	37	37	36
Astra	24	9	5	10	26	24	32
Gloria	24	8	4	12	38	43	28
Onesti	24	8	3	13	34	47	27
Farul	24	7	4	13	23	39	25
U Craiova	24	6	5	13	26	39	23
Resita	24	4	8	12	19	45	20
Foresta	24	4	4	16	24	45	16
Olimpia	24	3	4	17	15	45	13
U Cluj	24	2	4	18	12	61	10

RUSSIA

Apr 3: Shinnik 1 Chernomorets 0; Zenit 2 Uralan 0; Alaniya 0 Spartak 1; CSKA 1 Kryliya Sovetov 1; Rotor 1 Dinamo 2; Rostselmash 1 Lokomotiv M 1; Torpedo 1 Zhemchuzhina 0; Lokomotiv NN 0 Saturn 1.
Apr 7: Spartak 3 Kryliya Sovetov 0.
Apr 11: Shinnik 0 Zenit 0; Zhemchuzhina 1

Lokomotiv NN 1; Dinamo 4 Rostselmash 0; Kryliya Sovetov 0 Rotor 1; Alaniya 0 CSKA 1; Uralan 0 Spartak 1; Chernomorets 1 Saturn 1.
Apr 12: Lokomotiv M 1 Torpedo 2.
Apr 17: Zenit 1 Chernomorets 1; Spartak 4 Shinnik 1; CSKA 2 Uralan 0; Rotor 0 Alaniya 2; Rostselmash 2 Kryliya Sovetov 1; Torpedo 0 Dinamo 1; Lokomotiv NN 0 Lokomotiv M 0; Saturn 3 Zhemchuzhina 0.

RUSSIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spartak	4	4	0	0	9	1	12
Dinamo	3	3	0	0	7	1	9
Saturn	3	2	1	0	5	1	7
CSKA	3	2	1	0	4	1	7
Torpedo	3	2	0	1	3	2	6
Zenit	3	1	2	0	3	1	5
Shinnik	3	1	1	1	2	4	4
Rostselmash	3	1	1	1	3	6	4
Alaniya	3	1	0	2	2	2	3
Rotor	3	1	0	2	2	4	3
Chernomorets	3	0	2	1	2	3	2
Lokomotiv M	3	0	2	1	2	3	2
Lokomotiv NN	3	0	2	1	1	2	2
Zhemchuzhina	3	0	1	2	1	5	1
Kryliya Sovetov	4	0	1	3	2	7	1
Uralan	3	0	0	3	0	5	0

SCOTLAND

Saturday, April 3

Aberdeen 3 (Winters 47, 56, 68)
Dunfermline 1 (Graham 7) Att: 11,371

Celtic 5 (Larsson 7, pen 66, Burley 32, Viduka 41, Blinker 70)
Dundee 0 Att: 59,269

Dundee Utd 0
Motherwell 3 (Brannan 7, Spencer 38, 60) Att: 8,110

Hearts 2 (McSwegan 16, 43)
Kilmarnock 2 (Henry 73, McCoist 77) Att: 14,689

Sunday, April 4

St Johnstone 3 (Weir 14, Simao 73, McAnaspie 90)
Rangers 1 (Moore 58) Att: 9,740

Tuesday, April 6

Dundee Utd 1 (Dodds 7)
Hearts 3 (McSwegan 25, 45, Cameron 60) Att: 10,648

Saturday, April 10

Kilmarnock 4 (Mahood 9, MacPherson 19, McCutcheon 86, 90)
Aberdeen 2 (Winters 2, Hamilton 52) Att: 9,048

Motherwell 1 (Spencer 2)
Dundee 2 (Falconer 65, Grady 73) Att: 5,717

Wednesday, April 14

Rangers 1 (Van Bronckhorst 37)
Dunfermline 0 Att: 46,220

Hearts 2 (Adam 27, 48)
Celtic 4 (Riseth 2, Blinker 7, Viduka 29, 54) Att: 16,388

Saturday, April 17

Aberdeen 0
Dundee Utd 4 (Dodds 36, 56, Miller 53, Olofsson 54) Att: 11,603

Celtic 1 (Larsson pen 63)
Motherwell 0 Att: 59,588

Dundermline 0
Kilmarnock 6 (Henry 26, 75, Mitchell 56, Durrant 58, Vareille 68, McCoist 90) Att: 5,500

St Johnstone 0
Hearts 0 Att: 6,146

Sunday, April 18

Dundee 1 Anderson 23)
Rangers 1 (Vidmar 49) Att: 11,051

Tuesday, April 20

Dundee Utd 0
St Johnstone 1 (Griffin 42) Att: 6,741

SCOTLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rangers	31	20	6	5	66	28	66
Celtic	31	18	8	5	77	27	62
Kilmarnock	31	14	11	6	44	24	53
St Johnstone	31	13	10	8	36	36	49
Motherwell	31	8	10	13	31	44	34
Aberdeen	31	9	7	15	36	58	34
Dundee	31	9	7	15	27	51	34
Dundee Utd	31	8	8	15	32	38	32
Hearts	31	7	8	16	29	47	29
Dunfermline	31	4	15	12	23	48	27

SCOTTISH CUP – SEMI-FINALS

Apr 10: Celtic 2 Dundee Utd 0.
Apr 11: St Johnstone 0 Rangers 4.

SPAIN

Saturday, April 3

La Coruna 1 (Pauleta 79)
Atletico Madrid 1 (Valeron 18) Att: 20,000

Racing Santander 0
Valencia 1 (Bjorklund 80) Att: 15,000

Sunday, April 4

Athletic Bilbao 0
Real Sociedad 0 Att: 40,000

Barcelona 3 (Rivaldo 23, pen 33, pen 87)
Oviedo 1 (Dely Valdes 25) Att: 50,000

Betis Sevilla 0
Espanyol 1 (Tamudo 67) Att: 35,000

Extremadura 1 (Velamazan 59)
Celta Vigo 1 (Sanchez pen 65) Att: 9,800

Real Madrid 3 (Hierro 11, Morientes 63, Raul 67)
Alaves 2 (Pablo pen 10, Sivori 18) Att: 75,000

Valladolid 2 (Peternac 40, Victor 52)
Tenerife 1 (Makaay 59) Att: 15,000

Villarreal 0
Mallorca 2 (Biagini 75, Dani 88) Att: 9,000

Zaragoza 2 (Aguado 25, Marcos Vales 31)
Salamanca 0 Att: 15,000

Saturday, April 10

Tenerife 2 (Pinilla 43, Makaay 56)
Barcelona 3 (Cocu 19, Rivaldo 36, Celades 47) Att: 22,000

Sunday, April 11

Alaves 2 (Sivori 34, Magno 52)
La Coruna 1 (Turu Flores 44) Att: 18,000

Atletico Madrid 2 (Roberto 89, Juninho 90)
Villarreal 2 (Craioveanu 28, Alberto 32) Att: 30,000

Celta Vigo 5 (Penev 7, 15, 61, Mazinho 11, Mostovoi 33)
Real Madrid 1 (Morientes 32) Att: 28,000

Espanyol 2 (Tamudo 24, Benitez 90)
Zaragoza 1 (Marcos Vales 75) Att: 20,800

Mallorca 1 (Dani 53)
Valladolid 0 Att: 14,000

Oviedo 0
Athletic Bilbao 0 Att: 10,500

Real Sociedad 1 (Sa Pinto 54)
Betis Sevilla 0 Att: 25,579

Salamanca 1 (Korino pen 86)
Racing Santander 2 (Magallanes 32, Salva 90) Att: 14,000

Valencia 1 (Serban 64)
Extremadura 1 (Esposito 62) Att: 45,000

Saturday, April 17

Barcelona 2 (F de Boer 4, Kluivert 24)
Mallorca 1 (Biagini 89) Att: 70,000

Valladolid 1 (Victor 57)
Atletico Madrid 0 Att: 14,000

Monday, April 19

Athletic Bilbao 2 (Ezquerro 67, Urzaiz pen 90)
Tenerife 0 Att: 35,000

Celta Vigo 1 (Sanchez 56)
Alaves 1 (Pablo Sanchez 53) Att: 27,000

Extramadura 1 (Outattara 15)
Salamanca 1 (Cardetti 23) Att: 10,000

Racing Santander 0
Espanyol 2 (Arteaga 36, Dario Silva 54) Att: 14,000

Betis Sevilla 5 (Finidi 2, 46, Filipescu 33, Denilson 52, Oli 71)
Real Oviedo 0 Att: 38,000

Real Madrid 3 (Morientes 10, Raul 30, 71)
Valencia 1 (Mendieta 69) Att: 55,000

Real Zaragoza 1 (Milosevic 66)
Real Sociedad 1 (Idiakez 32) Att: 21,000

Villarreal 1 (Alfaro pen 53)
La Coruna 2 (Schurrer 7, Djalminha 40) Att: 17,000

SPAIN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	30	19	5	6	67	34	62
Celta	30	14	11	5	59	30	53
Real Madrid	30	16	4	10	61	50	52
Valencia	30	15	6	9	45	31	51
Deportivo	30	14	9	7	43	32	51
Mallorca	30	15	6	9	33	23	51
Athletic Bilbao	30	13	8	9	35	34	47
Real Sociedad	30	11	10	9	36	33	43
Espanyol	30	10	12	8	33	33	42
Zaragoza	30	11	8	11	42	40	41
Valladolid	30	11	7	12	30	32	40
Betis	30	11	7	12	33	36	40
Oviedo	30	9	11	10	33	43	38
Atletico Madrid	30	9	8	13	43	39	35
Racing	30	9	8	13	36	42	35
Villareal	30	7	11	12	36	45	32
Alaves	30	8	7	15	29	43	31
Extremadura	30	6	9	15	20	46	27
Tenerife	30	4	12	14	28	47	24
Salamanca	30	6	5	19	24	53	23

SWEDEN

Apr 10: Helsingborgs 3 Gothenburg 1.
Apr 11: Trelleborgs 2 Hammarby 2; Orgryte 1 Halmstads 0; Djurgardens 3 Norrkoping 0.
Apr 12: Elfsborg 3 Kalmar 0; AIK 1 Orebro 1; Vastra Frolunda 2 Malmo 1.
Apr 18: Kalmar 3 Trelleborgs 2; Norrkoping 0 Orgryte 2.

SWEDEN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Orgryte	2	2	0	0	3	0	6
Djurgardens	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
Elfsborg	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
Helsingborgs	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
Vastra Frolunda	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Kalmar	2	1	0	1	3	5	3
Hammarby	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
AIK	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Orebro	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Trelleborgs	2	0	1	1	4	5	1
Malmo	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Halmstads	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Gothenburg	1	0	0	1	1	3	0
Norrkoping	2	0	0	2	0	5	0

SWITZERLAND

Saturday, April 3

Lausanne 4 (Celestini pen 26, Mazzoni 69, 72, Hanzi 85)
St Gallen 1 (Muller 9) Att: 5,150

Servette 1 (Rey 60)
Zurich 1 (Kunz 40) Att: 5,103

Monday, April 5

Grasshopper 4 (De Napoli 5, 6, 52, Tikva 11)
Basle 2 (Varela 79, Frick 90) Att: 10,500

Neuchatel Xamax 1 (Molist 44)
Lucerne 1 (Koumantarakis 21) Att: 6,300

Saturday, April 10

Zurich 2 (Hadel 9, Kunz 18)
Neuchatel Xamax 2 (Isabella 64, N'Diaye 85) Att: 3,900

Sunday, April 11

Basle 1 (Frick 60)
Lausanne 2 (Gerber 13, Kreuzer og 54) Att: 5,315

Lucerne 2 (Koumantarakis 43, 64)
Servette 1 (Rey 82) Att: 3,900

St Gallen 0
Grasshopper 0 Att: 9,100

Saturday, April 17

Lausanne 2 (Thurre 29, Rehn 60)
Grasshopper 3 (Gren 4, Kavelasjvili 22, Yakin 45) Att: 7,100

Zurich 3 (Jamarauli 6, Fischer 10, Bartlett 28)
Lucerne 0 Att: 2,700

Basle 3 (Frick 55, Canalupi pen 59, Kreuzer 79)
St Gallen 3 (Contini 48, Muller 70, Luis 90) Att: 4,057

Neuchatel Xamax 0
Servette 3 (Vurens 51, Rey 79, Buhlmann 85) Att: 6,700

SWITZERLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Servette	7	4	1	2	10	6	35
Lausanne	7	5	0	2	16	8	34
Grasshoppers	7	4	2	1	13	6	33
Basle	7	3	1	3	11	11	24
Zurich	7	1	2	4	7	10	24
St Gallen	7	2	2	3	10	12	22
Neuchatel Xamax	7	1	3	3	7	14	22
Lucerne	7	2	1	4	5	12	21

SWISS CUP – 5TH RND

Mar 24: Schaffhausen 0 Lucerne 1 (aet).

SWISS CUP

Apr 14: Buochs 0 Servette 1; Grenchen 0 Sion 2; Bellinzona 2 Lucerne 3; Thun 1 Delemont 3; Wil 1 Lausanne 4; Red Star 2 Yverdon Sports 1; Zurich 0 Lugano 1; Stade Nyon 1 Grasshoppers 1 (aet).

TURKEY

Apr 2: Adanaspor 0 Trabzonspor 2.
Apr 3: Istanbulspor 0 Antalyaspor 1; Samsunspor 0 Galatasaray 3.
Apr 4: Bursaspor 2 Altay 0; Erzurum 2 Ankaragucu 2; Fenerbahce 1 Besiktas 2; Genclerbirligi 1 Sakaryaspor 0; Kocaelispor 1 Gaziantepspor 1; Karabukspor 1 Dardanelspor 0.
Apr 9: Besiktas 2 Genclerbirligi 0.
Apr 10: Galatasaray 2 Karabukspor 0.
Apr 11: Sakaryaspor 0 Adanaspor 0; Gaziantepspor 2 Istanbulspor 1; Altay 3 Kocaelispor 1; Dardanelspor 3 Bursaspor 1; Trabzonspor 3 Samsunspor 1; Antalyaspor 1 Erzurum 0; Ankaragucu 2 Fenerbahce 4.
Apr 15: Karabukspor 0 Trabzonspor 0.
Apr 16: Fenerbahce 3 Antalyaspor 1.
Apr 17: Istanbulspor 3 Altay 0; Erzurum 2 Gaziantepspor 1; Galatasaray 5 Dardanelspor 2; Adanaspor 0 Besiktas 1; Samsunspor 2 Sakaryaspor 2; Kocaelispor 4 Bursaspor 0; Genclerbirligi 3 Ankaragucu 1.

TURKEY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Galatasaray	28	20	6	2	75	27	66
Besiktas	28	19	6	3	47	23	63
Fenerbahce	28	18	4	6	67	23	58
Trabzonspor	28	16	6	6	42	26	54
Kocaelispor	28	13	5	10	37	29	44
Antalyaspor	28	13	5	10	37	34	44
Genclerbirligi	28	11	8	9	42	37	41
Gaziantepspor	28	10	10	8	41	38	40
Istanbulspor	28	10	7	11	41	41	37
Ankaragucu	28	9	5	14	40	46	32
Altay	28	9	5	14	39	50	32
Samsunspor	28	9	5	14	33	48	32
Bursaspor	28	9	4	15	41	61	31
Adanaspor	28	8	5	15	26	44	29
Erzurum	28	7	8	13	32	54	29
Sakaryaspor	28	7	7	14	35	44	28
Dardanelspor	28	5	8	15	24	41	23
Karabukspor	28	4	6	18	18	51	18

UKRAINE

Apr 3: Dynamo 0 Tavriya 0; Shakhtar 2 Metalurh Z 1; Nyva 3 Prykarpattya 1; Metalist 0 Kryvbas 0; Karpaty 2 Metalurh D 0; Metalurh M 3 Mykolaiv 0; Zirka 1 CSKA 1; Dnipro 2 Vorskla 0.
Apr 10: CSKA 2 Mykolaiv 0; Metalurh Z 2 Nyva 1; Prykarpattya 1 Metalist 2; Kryvbas 0 Karpaty 0; Tavriya 0 Metalurh M 2; Vorskla 1 Shakhtar 2; Zirka 2 Dnipro 0.
Apr 12: Metalurh D 1 Dynamo 4.
Apr 16: Dynamo 1 Kryvbas 0.
Apr 17: Shakhtar 1 Zirka 2; Metalist 1 Metalurh Z 0; Karpaty 1 Prykarpattya 0; Metalurh M 0 Metalurh D 0; Mykolaiv 0 Tavriya 1; Nyva 2 Vorskla 1; Dnipro 0 CSKA 1.

UKRAINE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dynamo	19	14	4	1	52	13	46
Shakhtar	21	15	1	5	58	21	46
Karpaty	21	11	7	3	35	19	40
Kryvbas	21	9	9	3	22	11	36
Metalist	21	10	3	8	21	25	33
Metalurh M	20	9	5	6	27	17	32
CSKA	19	7	8	4	23	19	29
Zirka	20	7	5	8	19	22	26
Nyva	21	7	4	10	21	28	25
Tavriya	21	6	6	9	19	24	24
Metalurh Z	20	7	3	10	27	35	24
Metalurh D	21	6	6	9	22	33	24
Vorskla	20	6	4	10	20	28	22
Dnipro	20	6	2	12	16	33	20
Prykarpattya	21	3	5	13	17	42	14
Mykolaiv	20	2	4	14	11	40	10

YUGOSLAVIA

YUGOSLAVIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Partizan	24	21	3	0	59	11	66
Obilic	24	20	4	0	61	9	64
Red Star	24	15	6	3	54	18	51
Vojvodina	24	13	3	8	45	22	42
Rad	24	11	7	6	26	26	40
Proleter	24	10	5	9	29	29	35
Hajduk Kula	24	9	5	10	27	28	32
OFK	24	8	7	9	35	39	31
Sartid	24	7	9	8	24	27	30
Radnicki K	24	9	3	12	33	43	30
Milicionar	24	8	5	11	39	39	29
Zemun	24	9	1	14	30	47	28
Zeleznik	24	7	5	12	29	43	26
Buducnost	24	7	5	12	28	42	26
Mogren	24	4	8	12	18	42	20
Radnicki N	24	4	7	13	21	44	19
Pristina	24	5	3	16	25	49	18
Spartak	24	6	0	18	33	58	18

SOUTH AMERICA

LIBERTADORES CUP

FIRST ROUND

Top three from each group qualified for second round, to which defending champions Vasco da Gama had a bye.

Group 1

March 23
Bella Vista (Uru) 2 (F Gareca 1, Pilipauskas 35)
Monterrey (Mex) 0

March 25
Nacional (Uru) 2 (Sosa pen 26, 60)
Monterrey 3 (Sinha 3, pen 32, Ayala 89)

March 30
Bella Vista 5 (Alonso 31, 35, 38, R Lemos 50, H Lopez Baez 86)
Estudiantes (Ven) 1 (Brignani 82)

April 2
Nacional 2 (Sosa 22, pen 80)
Estudiantes 1 (Moran 26)

GROUP 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nacional (Uru)	6	4	0	2	9	8	12
Estudiantes (Ven)	6	3	0	3	9	14	9
Bella Vista (Uru)	6	2	1	3	9	6	7
Monterrey (Mex)	6	2	1	3	10	9	7

Group 2

March 23
Velez Sarsfield (Arg) 1 (D Husain 50)
Once Caldas (Col) 0

March 25
River Plate (Arg) 3 (Pizzi 10, Sorin 12, Castillo 81)
Once Caldas 0

April 6
River Plate 2 (Castillo 36, Ramos pen 38)
Deportivo Cali (Col) 1 (V Bonilla 21)

April 8
Velez Sarsfield 3 (Camps 10, 30, Pandolfi 78)
Deportivo Cali 0

GROUP 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Velez S (Arg)	6	2	3	1	6	3	9
Dep Cali (Col)	6	3	0	3	4	8	9
River Plate (Arg)	6	2	2	2	8	8	8
Once Caldas (Col)	6	2	1	3	7	6	7

Group 3

March 24
Cerro Porteno (Par) 3 (Caballero 20, Gavilan 30, Guachinho 50)
Corinthians (Bra) 0

March 26
Olimpia (Par) 1
Corinthians 2

April 7
Palmeiras (Bra) 2 (Gauchinho 48, Junior Baiano 60)
Cerro Porteno 1 (Arce 63)

April 9
Corinthians 4 (Dinei 5, 54, 57, Marcelinho Carioca 84)
Olimpia 0

GROUP 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Corinthians (Bra)	6	4	0	2	16	8	12
Palmeiras (Bra)	6	3	1	2	12	10	10
Cerro Porteno (Par)	6	2	1	3	14	20	7
Olimpia (Par)	6	1	2	3	11	15	5

Group 4

March 24
Colo Colo (Chl) 1 (Uribe 10)
Universitario (Per) 0

March 25
Sporting Cristal (Per) 1 (Olcese 44)
Universidad Catolica (Chl) 1 (Brizuela 84)

April 7
Colo Colo 1 (Neira 16)
Sporting Cristal 1 (Ferreira 59)

Apr 8
Universitario 1 (Coria 72)
Universidad Catolica 3 (Rios 45, 80, Brizuela 71)

GROUP 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
U Catolica (Chl)	6	3	2	1	9	5	11
Colo Colo (Chl)	6	2	2	2	5	7	8
Universitario (Per)	6	2	1	3	7	8	7
Sport Cristal (Per)	6	0	5	1	7	8	5

Group 5

March 23
Jorge Wilstermann (Bol) 4 (Sergio Joao 17, 74, Eterovic 45, Galindo 69)
Emelec (Ecu) 2 (Juarez 14, Fernandez 43)

March 25
Blooming (Bol) 2 (Antelo 35, 65)
Emelec 0

April 6
Jorge Wilstermann 1 (Sergio Joao 28)
LDU (Ecu) 1 (Balcazar 81)

April 9
Blooming 3 (Manacho 2, Gutierrez 16, Antelo 26)
LDU 1 (Escobar 33)

GROUP 5

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
LDU (Ecu)	6	3	1	2	10	8	10
Emelec (Ecu)	6	3	0	3	9	12	9
Wilstermann (Bol)	6	2	2	2	9	9	8
Blooming (Bol)	6	2	1	3	5	4	7

SECOND ROUND – 1ST LEGS

Apr 14 – Maldonado
Bella Vista (Uru) 2 (Alonso 74, Lembo 83)
Universidad Catolica (Chl) 2 (Rios 36, Figueroa 54)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 2,000. **Ref:** Elizonda (Arg)
Bella Vista: Berbia, Pilipauskas, Pumar, Russomando, Moran, Lembo, Lemos, Casanova, Ortiz, Alonso, Garcia (Gareca).
Univ Catolica: Tapia, Romero, Ramirez, Varges, Ribera, Ormazabal (Cornejo), Lepe, Parraguez, Tapia (Osorio), Figueroa, Rios (Simionato).

Apr 14 – Cochamba
Jorge Wilstermann (Bol) 1 (Sergio Joao 49)
Corinthians (Bra) 1 (Marcelinho Carioca 70)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Gonales (Par).
Wilstermann: Soria, Carvalho, Carballo, Sozzani, Morejon, Baldivieso, Reinoso (Luna/Eterovic), Galindo, Villarroel, Joao, Zamora (Guzman).
Corinthians: Nei, Andre Santos, Marcio Costa, Gamarra, Silvinho, Amaral, Vampeta, Rincon, Marcelinho Carioca, Edilson, Mirnadinha (Pingo).

Apr 14 – Asuncion
Cerro Porteno (Par) 5 (Blanco 1, Campos 29, Caballero 45, 64, Gauchinho 55)
Nacional (Uru) 0
HT: 3-0. **Ref:** Cardeira (Bra)
Cerro Porteno: Aceval, Recalde, Blanco, Peralta, Toledo, Escobar, Gavilan, Campos (Caballero), Alvarenga (Aguilera), Caballero (Fernandez), Gauchinho.
Nacional: Romay, Del Campo, D Rodriguez, H Rodriguez (Nunez), Vergara, Scotti, Venzzini (Regueiro), Gigou, Jorjao, Sosa, Alvez.

Apr 14 – Sao Paulo
Palmeiras (Bra) 1 (Oseas 41)
Vasco da Gama (Bra) 1 (Guilherme 64)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Rezende (Bra)
Palmeiras: Marcos, Arce, Junior Baiano, Cleber, Junior, Galeano (Rogerio 71), Cesar Sampaio, Alex (Evair 77), Zinho (Jackson 73), Paulo Nunes, Oseas.
Vasco: Carlos Germano, Ze Maria, Odvan, Mauro Galvao, Felipe, Nasa, Paulo Miranda, Juninho (Fabricio 81), Ramon (Alex Oliveira 73), Donizete, Guilherme (Alex 87).

Apr 14 – Lima
Universitario (Per) 0
Velez Sarsfield (Arg) 0
Att: 35,000
Universitario: Ibanez, Guadalupe, Araujo, Pajualo, Arriaga (Maldonado 62), Giulizza, Carranza, Gomez (Bernales 81), Guzman (Esidio), Coria, Cornalio.
Velez Sarsfield: Chilavert, Zandona, Mendez, Sotomayor, Cardozo, Husain, Cubero, Falcon, Bassedas, Camps (Dominguez 63), Husain (Ramirez 81). *Sent off: Cardozo 65mins.*

Apr 14 – Buenos Aires
River Plate (Arg) 1 (Netto pen 8)
LDU Quito (Ecu) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Sanchez (Chl)
River Plate: Bonano, Lobardi, Ramos, Berizzo, Netto, Astrada, Sorin, Berti (Pizzi 59), Castillo (Gancedo 70), Saviola (Aimar 42), Rambert. *Sent off: Rambert 31mins.*
LDU: Espinosa, De la Cruz, Capurro, Tenorio, Reasco, Gonzalez, Obregon (Jacome 75), Chilapana (Banalcazar 57), Escobar (Guaman 69), Perez, Magoiolo. *Sent off: Tenorio 73mins.*

Apr 14 – Guayaquil
Emelec (Ecu) 1 (Juarez 31)
Estudiantes (Ven) 3 (Raices 14, 41, Moran 26)
HT: 1-3.

Apr 15 – Cali
Deportivo Cali (Col) 2 (Bonilla 3, Zapata pen 14)
Colo Colo (Chl) 0
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Hidalgo (Per)
Dep Cali: Dudamel, Marrero, Mosquare, Yepas, Redoya, Zapata, Perez (Arce 88), Viveros, Candelo (Ramirez 78), Bonilla, Rey.
Colo Colo: Arbiza, Mena, Henriquez, Contreras, Munoz, Villaseca, Espina, Uribe (Cordoba 46), Dos Santos (Zuniga 67), M. Neira, Montecinos.

ARGENTINA

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

March 12-15

Ferro Carril Oeste 0
Gimnasia LP 1 (Reggi 62)

Gimnasia J 0
Boca Juniors 2 (Palermo 62, Barros Schelotto 67)

Independiente 1 (V Lopez 17)
Newell's Old Boys 1 (Crosa 47)

Lanus 2 (Belloso, Carboni)
Belgrano Cordoba 0

River Plate 2 (Angel 35, C Castillo 86)
Argentinos Juniors 0

Rosario Central 2 (E Gonzalez 11, Scotto pen 42)
Racing Club 1 (R Capris pen 70)

March 19-22

Argentinos Juniors 0
Boca Juniors 3 (Riquelme 8, 47, Barros Schelotto 41)

Belgrano Cordoba 1 (Artime pen 90)
Union Santa Fe 0

Colon Santa Fe 2 (Goux 78, Fuertes 86)
Talleres Cordoba 0

Gimnasia LP 7 (Sava 3, 74, Messera 5, 34, 85, Romero 11, Reggi 21)
Gimnasia J 5 (Lobo 24, 83, Morales Santos 26, A Onzalez 42, Ruscitto 57)

Huracan 1 (Silvera 11)
Ferro Carril Oeste 0

Newell's Old Boys 3 (Cobelli 20, 51, Real 32)
Lanus 2 (Ballosa 61, De la Corta 84)

Platense 1 (Godoy 74)
Rosario Central 1 (Scotto 60)

Racing Club 0
Independiente 2 (J Calderon 53, C Gomez 85)

River Plate 1 (Escudero 75)
Estudiantes 0

Velez Sarsfield 1 (Mendez 76)
San Lorenzo 1 (Gorosito 15)

March 26-29

Boca Juniors 1 (Riquelme 58)
Gimnasia LP 1 (Yllana 13)

Estudiantes 2 (Yaque 20, 27)
Argentinos Juniors 1 (Quinteros pen 61)

Ferro Carril Oeste 0
Belgrano Cordoba 1 (Rueda 78)

Gimnasia J 2 (Lobo 17, Balvorin 63)
Huracan 2 (Casas 20, Chacoma 69)

Independiente 2 (Calderon 26, 37)
Platense 1 (Languita 39)

Lanus 1 (Marzo 90)
Racing Club 0

Rosario Central 0
Colon Santa Fe 3 (Aguilar 66, Fuertes 80, Trimarchi 88)

San Lorenzo 2 (Romeo 26, Biaggio 87)
River Plate 2 (S Berti 9, Castillo 41)

Talleres Cordoba 1 (Garay 11)
Velez Sarsfield 1 (Camps 8)

Union Santa Fe 1 (Noriega 84)
Newell's Old Boys 0

March 30-April 2

Argentinos Juniors 2 (Quinteros 59, Bennett 90)
Gimnasia LP 1 (Reggi 56)

Belgrano Cordoba 1 (Sosa 38)
Gimnasia J 4 (Aguirrez 24, Lobo 40, 75, 79)

Colon Santa Fe 2 (Aquino 38, G Cordoba 80)
Independiente 2 (Calderon 40, Pena 44)

Estudiantes 0
San Lorenzo 2 (Gorosito pen 38, pen 64)

Huracan 0
Boca Juniors 1 (Riquelme 59)

Newell's Old Boys 0
Ferro Carril Oeste 0

Platense 2 (Chatruc 64, Zanello 87)
Lanus 5 (Belloso 7, 26, 59, Vilallonga pen 20, 53)

Racing Club 4 (Latorre 10, Estevez 26, Bezombe 32, 90)
Union Santa Fe 2 (Perezlindo 84, Trotta 87)

River Plate 3 (Castillo 14, 18, 52)
Talleres Cordoba 0

Velez Sarsfield 0
Rosario Central 2 (Perez 46, Moreno y Fabianesi 87)

April 2-5

Boca Juniors 1 (Palermo 59)
Belgrano Cordoba 0

Ferro Carril Oeste 0
Racing Club 0

Gimnasia J 0
Newell's Old Boys 1 (Real 63)

Gimnasia LP 1 (Messera 35)
Huracan 0

Independiente 0
Velez Sarsfield 2 (Pandolfi 31, Chilavert pen 72)

Lanus 2 (Bellose 40, H Morales 49)
Colon Santa Fe 1 (G Cordoba 37)

Rosario Central 3 (Maceratesi 41, Moreno y Fabianesi 67, Scotto 69)
River Plate 1 (Netto pen 38)

San Lorenzo 1 (Romeo 17)
Argentinos Juniors 1 (Quinteros 21)

Talleres Cordoba 2 (Zelaya pen 45, Canobbio 66)
Estudiantes 0

Union Santa Fe 3 (G Castillo 15, Noriega 20, Mendoza 90)
Platense 1 (Chatruc 31)

April 9-12

Argentinos Juniors 1 (Solana 67)
Huracan 2 (Garipe 71, Mhamed 83)

Belgrano Cordoba 3 (Luis Fernando 28, Enria 60, Rueda 67)
Gimnasia LP 1 (S Romero 82)

Estudiantes 1 (B Gimenez 15)
Rosario Central 1 (Colusso 60)

Newell's Old Boys 0
Boca Juniors 1 (Palermo 82)

Platense 0
Ferro Carril Oeste 0

Racing Club 2 (Ojeda 9, Estevez 52)
Gimnasia J 0

River Plate 2 (Castillo 11, L Ramos 69)
Independiente 1 (Rotchen 23)

San Lorenzo 1 (Biaggio 84)
Talleres Cordoba 0

Velez Sarsfield 3 (D Husain 1, 33, Marangoni 39)
Lanus 2 (Kmet 30, Marzo 71)

April 16-19

Boca Juniors 3 (Barros Schelotto 10, Barijho 17, 49)
Racing Club 0

Ferro Carril Oeste 0
Colon Santa Fe 0

Gimnasia J 1 (Lobo 68)
Platense 1 (Veron pen 15)

Huracan 0
Belgrano Cordoba 3 (Torres 25, Enria 32, Rueda 47)

Independiente 0
Estudiantes 0

Lanus 1 (Serrizuela pen 74)
River Plate 1 (Angel 33)

Rosario Central 1 (Morano y Fabianesi 39)
San Lorenzo 0

Talleres Cordoba 1 (Diaz 86)
Argentinos Juniors 1 (Quinteros 70)

Union Santa Fe 1 (Cabrol 20)
Velez Sarsfield 0

ARGENTINA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Boca Juniors	8	7	1	0	16	1	22
River Plate	8	5	2	1	13	7	17
Lanus	8	5	1	2	17	10	16
San Lorenzo	8	4	3	1	12	7	15
Rosario Central	8	4	2	2	11	11	14
Union Santa Fe	7	4	1	2	14	8	13
Belgrano Cordoba	8	4	1	3	12	11	13
Colon Santa Fe	7	3	2	2	10	7	11
Newell's OB	7	3	2	2	9	6	11
Independiente	8	2	4	2	11	11	10
Gimnasia LP	7	3	1	3	12	16	10
Velez Sarsfield	8	2	2	4	8	11	8
Talleres Cordoba	7	2	2	3	7	10	8
Estudiantes	8	2	2	4	6	9	8
Arg Juniors	8	2	2	4	8	12	8
Huracan	8	2	2	4	7	12	8
Racing Club	7	2	1	4	7	11	7
Gimnasia J	8	1	2	5	12	18	5
Ferro Carril Oeste	8	0	4	4	0	6	4
Platense	8	0	3	5	9	17	3

BOLIVIA

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Mar 25: Bamin Real 0 Destroyers 4.
Mar 28: Santa Cruz 4 San Jose 1; Jorge Wilstermann 7 Destroyers 3; Bolivar 0 Independiente 0; Bamin Real 1 The Strongest 0; Oriente 1 Guabira 1.
Mar 31: Jorge Wilstermann 2 Bolivar 2; The Strongest 2 Blooming 0.
Apr 3-4: The Strongest 1 Jorge Wilstermann 1; San Jose 0 Bolivar 0; Bamin Real 1 Independiente 4; Guabira 1 Union Central 2; Destroyers 0 Oriente 1; Blooming 4 Santa Cruz 1.
Apr 10-11: The Strongest 3 Oriente 0; San Jose 2 Independiente 3; Bamin Real 2 Jorge Wilstermann 2; Guabira 0 Santa Cruz 1; Destroyers 0 Union Central 2.
Apr 14: Bolivar 1 Guabira 3; Oriente 3 Bamin Real 0; Santa Cruz 2 Destroyers 6.
Apr 16: Union Central 1 The Strongest 0.
Apr 18: Guabira 2 San Jose 1.

BOLIVIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Independiente	12	7	2	3	26	16	23
Bamin Real	11	6	3	2	19	15	21
Santa Cruz	11	6	3	2	19	17	21
Bolivar	10	5	5	0	22	6	20
Union Central	12	5	3	4	19	16	18
The Strongest	13	4	2	7	16	16	14
Guabira	13	3	5	5	14	23	14
Oriente	10	3	3	4	13	13	12
Blooming	7	3	1	3	8	7	10
J Wilstermann	10	2	4	4	20	21	10
San Jose	10	3	1	6	13	19	10
Destroyers	12	2	2	8	12	32	8

BRAZIL

SAO PAULO CHAMPIONSHIP – SECOND PHASE

Mar 24: Santos 1 Sao Paulo 2; Guarani 2 Portuguesa 3; Rio Branco 7 Mogi Mirim 1; Matonense 3 Barbarense 1.
Mar 25: Portuguesa Sant 1 Palmeiras 4.
Mar 27: Sao Paulo 4 Mogi Mirim 0; Rio Branco 1 Santos 2.
Mar 28: Portuguesa 1 Barbarense 5; Palmeiras 3 Corinthians 1; Matonense 4 Guarani 0; Inter Limeira 1 Portuguesa Sant 0.
Mar 30: Inter Limeira 0 Corinthians 2.
Apr 3: Mogi Mirim 0 Palmeiras 0.
Apr 4: Santos 6 Inter Limeira 2; Corinthians 2 Portuguesa 4; Barbarense 1 Sao Paulo 2; Portuguesa Sant 0 Matonense 3; Guarani 3 Rio Branco 2.
Apr 10: Matonense 0 Sao Paulo 4.
Apr 11: Inter Limeira 1 Portuguesa 1; Palmeiras 2 Rio Branco 1; Mogi Mirim 2 Guarani 1; Santos 5 Portuguesa Sant 1; Corinthians 1 Barbarense 3.
Apr 17: Barbarense 2 Santos 0.
Apr 18: Rio Branco 5 Inter Limeira 3; Portuguesa 2 Matonense 1; Sao Paulo 4 Palmeiras 4; Portuguesa Sant 1 Mogi Mirim 1; Guarani 1 Corinthians 1.

GROUP 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sao Paulo	8	6	2	0	26	9	20
Palmeiras	8	5	3	0	17	9	18
Portuguesa	8	5	1	2	16	14	16
Matonense	8	4	1	3	18	14	13
Inter Limeira	8	3	2	3	13	17	11
Rio Branco	8	3	1	4	21	17	10

GROUP 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Santos	8	4	2	2	18	11	14
Barbarense	8	3	1	4	14	12	10
Corinthians	8	3	1	4	14	16	10
Guarani	8	1	2	5	11	18	5
Mogi Mirim	8	1	2	5	7	21	5
Portuguesa Sant	8	0	2	6	7	24	2

Teams play once against the sides in the other group and twice against teams in their own group. Top two in each group qualify for the semi-finals. First-phase groups were named 1 and 2; second-phase groups are named 3 and 4.

CARIOCA (RIO) CHAMPIONSHIP – FIRST STAGE

Mar 24: Madureira 0 Botafogo 0; Americano 0 Flamengo 2; Fluminense 4 Olaria 2; Bangu 3 Itaperuna 0; Vasco 2 Friburguense 1.
Mar 27: Vasco 3 Americano 2.
Mar 28: Friburguense 1 Fluminense 2; Itaperuna 0 Madureira 1; Botafogo 0 Flamengo 1; Olaria 1 Bangu 4.
Mar 31: Fluminense 5 Itaperuna 0; Madureira 0 Vasco 2; Olaria 1 Botafogo 0; Bangu 2 Americano 2.
Apr 1: Flamengo 3 Friburguense 1.
Apr 3: Botafogo 2 Bangu 1; Madureira 1 Americano 2.
Apr 4: Olaria 1 Vasco 1; Itaperuna 0 Friburguense 4; Flamengo 1 Fluminense 1.
Apr 10: Flamengo 1 Madureira 0.
Apr 11: Americano 4 Itaperuna 1; Olaria 2 Friburguense 2; Bangu 2 Fluminense 4; Vasco 1 Botafogo 0.
Apr 17: Bangu 1 Madureira 0; Botafogo 4 Fluminense 0; Itaperuna 1 Olaria 2; Friburguense 2 Americano 0.
Apr 18: Vasco 0 Flamengo 2.

FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Flamengo	9	8	1	0	18	5	25
Vasco da Gama	9	7	1	1	21	7	22
Fluminense	9	6	1	2	23	15	19
Friburguense	9	4	2	3	15	11	14
Olaria	9	4	2	3	14	16	14
Bangu	9	3	2	4	15	17	11
Botafogo	9	3	1	5	9	9	10
Americano	9	3	1	5	14	18	10
Madureira	9	1	1	7	4	11	4
Itaperuna	9	0	0	9	4	28	0

Flamengo qualify for Final as winners of the first stage.

CHILE

Mar 28: O'Higgins 2 Colo Colo 3; U de Chile 2 Santiago Morning 1; U Catolica 1 Coquimbo Unido 1; Palestino 1 Cobreloa 1; Dep Concepcion 1 Puerto Montt 1; Cobresal 3 Huachipato 2; Dep Iquique 3 Rangers 2; Dep La Serena 1 Audax Italiano 0.
Apr 4: Cobreloa 9 Coquimbo Unido 1; Colo Colo 1 Palestino 0; Rangers 1 U de Chile 1; Dep La Serena 1 U Catolica 5; Audax Italiano 0 Dep Iquique 0; Santiago Morning 1 Cobresal 3; Huachipato 1 Dep Concepcion 3; Puerto Montt 1 O'Higgins 1.
Apr 11: U Catolica 1 Cobreloa 2; Coquimbo Unido 1 Colo Colo 3; Palestino 2 Puerto Montt 3; O'Higgins 0 Huachipato 1; Dep Concepcion 1 Santiago Morning 0; Cobresal 2 Rangers 0; U de Chile 2 Audax Italiano 1; Dep Iquique 2 Dep La Serena 0.
Apr 18: Colo Colo 0 Cobreloa 1; Dep La Serena 0 U de Chile 2; Dep Iquique 2 U Catolica 0; Audax Italiano 1 Cobresal 0; Rangers 1 Concepcion 0; Santiago Morning 3 O'Higgins 2; Huachipato 3 Palestino 2; Puerto Montt 2 Coquimbo Unido 4.

CHILE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cobreloa	8	5	2	1	24	7	17
Colo Colo	8	5	2	1	15	8	17
U de Chile	8	5	2	1	15	10	17
Cobresal	8	5	1	2	16	10	16
Huachipato	8	4	2	2	14	12	14
Santiago Morning	8	4	1	3	10	10	13
Dep Iquique	8	3	3	2	9	8	12
U Catolica	8	3	2	3	17	11	11
Dep Concepcion	8	3	2	3	8	6	11
Palestino	8	3	1	4	16	14	10
Puerto Montt	8	2	3	3	12	14	9
Coquimbo Unido	8	2	1	5	10	27	7
Audax Italiano	8	1	3	4	5	8	6
Dep La Serena	8	1	3	4	9	17	6
Rangers	8	1	3	4	8	16	6
O'Higgins	8	1	1	6	10	20	4

Top eight play further two rounds for title.

COLOMBIA

Mar 24: Indep Medellin 1 At Nacional 1.
Mar 28: Dep Pasto 3 At Junior 3; Indep Santa Fe 2 At Nacional 0; Union Santa Marta 0 Bucaramanga 2; Dep Cali 2 Once Caldas 1; Tolima 1 Quindio 1; Cortulua 1 At Huila 1; Indep Medellin 0 Millonarios 0; Envigado 0 America 0.
Apr 1: At Nacional 0 Dep Cali 1.
Apr 4: Bucaramanga 6 Envigado 0; Union Santa Marta 4 Millonarios 0; America 1 Indep Medellin 0; At Huila 0 At Junior 1; At Nacional 0 Dep Cali 1; Quindio 1 Cortulua 2; Once Caldas 0 Dep Pasto 0; Indep Santa Fe 0 Tolima 0.
Apr 8: Indep Medellin 2 At Nacional 0.
Apr 11: At Junior 2 America 1; Cortulua 0 Bucaramanga 1; Dep Cali 2 Indep Santa Fe 0; Envigado 0 At Nacional 1; Indep Medellin 1 Once Caldas 0; Millonarios 2 At Huila 0; Tolima 2 Union Santa Marta 0.
Apr 15: Dep Pasto 2 Quindio 2.
Apr 18: Indep Santa Fe 0 Envigado 1; At Nacional 3 Cortulua 2; Quindio 2 Indep Medellin 2; Once Caldas 4 At Junior 0; Bucaramanga 0 Dep Pasto; America 0 At Huila 0; Union SM 2 Dep Cali 2; Tolima 2 Millonarios 0.

COLOMBIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
America	11	5	4	2	22	10	19
At Nacional	11	5	4	2	12	9	19
At Junior	11	5	4	2	18	18	19
Bucaramanga	11	4	6	1	18	9	18
Dep Cali	11	5	2	4	19	21	17
Indep Santa Fe	11	4	4	3	11	7	16
Once Caldas	11	4	2	5	13	10	14
Cortulua	11	4	2	5	17	21	14
Dep Pasto	11	2	7	2	20	17	13
Tolima	11	2	7	2	10	9	13
Indep Medellin	11	2	6	3	9	10	12
Quindio	11	3	3	5	15	19	12
Millonarios	11	2	6	3	9	14	12
Union Santa M	11	2	5	4	17	21	11
At Huila	11	2	5	4	7	11	11
Envigado	11	2	3	6	6	17	9

ECUADOR

Mar 28: LDU 3 Emelec 1; Barcelona 2 Aucas 1; El Nacional 1 Dep Cuenca 0; Dep Quito 1 Espoli 1; Audaz Octubrino 2 Macara 1; Olmedo 0 Delfin 0.
Apr 1: Macara 1 LDU 1; Dep Quito 2 Barcelona 0; Delfin 0 El Nacional 0; Dep Cuenca 2 Olmedo 2; Emelec 3 Espoli 0; Aucas 4 Audaz Octubrino 1.
Apr 4: LDU 2 Aucas 1; Olmedo 2 Macara 1; Audaz Octubrino 0 Dep Cuenca 2; El Nacional 2 Dep Quito 2; Espoli 4 Delfin 1; Barcelona 1 Emelec 1.
Apr 11: LDU 2 Audaz Octubrino 1; Macara 1 Emelec 0; Dep Cuenca 1 Aucas 0; Barcelona 2 Espoli 0; El Nacional 0 Olmedo 0; Delfin 1 Dep Quito 0.
Apr 18: El Nacional 4 LDU 0; Olmedo 1 Barcelona 2; Emelec 4 Delfin 2; Dep Quito 4 Dep Cuenca 1; Aucas 0 Macara 1; Audaz Octubrino 2 Espoli 1.

ECUADOR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	7	5	1	1	11	6	16
LDU	8	5	1	2	14	10	16
Dep Quito	7	4	1	2	12	7	13
El Nacional	8	3	4	1	9	4	13
Dep Cuenca	7	4	0	3	8	8	12
Emelec	8	3	2	3	11	10	11
Espoli	8	3	1	4	11	12	10
Olmedo	6	2	2	2	6	6	8
Macara	7	2	2	3	5	7	8
Delfin	8	2	2	4	8	16	8
Aucas	8	2	0	6	10	11	6
Audaz Octubrino	8	2	0	6	8	16	6

PARAGUAY

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Mar 21: Olimpia 3 Resistencia 0; Cerro Porteno 3 San Lorenzo 0; Guarani 1 Colegiales 0; 12 de Octubre 1 Cerro Cora 0; Sol de America 1 Sportivo Luqueno 2.
Mar 28: San Lorenzo 0 Olimpia 3; Cerro Cora 1 Cerro Porteno 4; Colegiales 1 12 de Octubre 0; Resistencia 1 Presidente Hayes 1; Sportivo Luqueno 1 Guarani 1.
Apr 11: 12 de Octubre 0 Sportivo Luqueno 1; Cerro Porteno 2 Colegiales 0; Presidente Hayes 0 San Lorenzo 0; Sol de America 1 Guarani 0; Olimpia 3 Cerro Cora 2.
Apr 18: Olimpia 3 Cerro Porteno 1; Cerro Cora 2 Sportivo Luqueno 2; San Lorenzo 1 Sol de America 1; Resistencia 0 Guarani 4; Presidente Hayes 1 12 de Octubre 2.

PARAGUAY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olimpia	8	6	2	0	24	8	20
Sporting Luqueno	8	5	3	0	18	11	18
Cerro Porteno	8	5	2	1	19	10	17
Guarani	8	4	2	2	14	10	14
Sol de America	8	4	2	2	12	9	14
San Lorenzo	9	3	3	3	14	13	12
12 de Octubre	9	2	4	3	10	11	10
Colegiales	8	2	1	5	11	19	7
Cerro Cora	8	1	2	5	13	21	5
Presidente Hayes	7	0	3	4	9	16	3
Resistencia	8	0	1	7	5	23	1

PERU

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Mar 28: Dep Municipal 2 Juan Aurich 0; Alianza Lima 1 Universitario 2; Cienciano 1 Alianza Atletico 0; Dep Pesquero 1 Sporting Cristal 1; IMI Talara 1 Union Minas 0; Sport Boys 3 Melgar 2.
Apr 1: Sporting Cristal 4 Union Minas 1; Sport Boys 0 Dep Pesquero 0; Melgar 4 IMI Talara 0; Cienciano 2 Dep Municipal 0; Alianza Atletico 2 Alianza Lima 1; Juan Aurich 0 Universitario 0.
Apr 4: Sporting Cristal 1 Sport Boys 1; Universitario 2 Alianza Atletico 1; Alianza Lima 1 Dep Municipal 1; Union Minas 0 Melgar 0; Juan Aurich 2 Cienciano 1; IMI Talara 2 Dep Pesquero 2.
Apr 10-11: Sport Boys 4 IMI Talara 0; Melgar 1 Sporting Cristal 3; Dep Municipal 2 Universitario 3; Cienciano 2 Alianza Lima 1; Alianza Atletico 5 Juan Aurich 1; Dep Pesquero 2 Union Minas 0.
Apr 17-18: Sport Boys 2 Cienciano 1; Sporting Cristal 3 Juan Aurich 0; Union Minas 1 Universitario 2; IMI Talara 2 Alianza Lima 4; Dep Pesquero 0 Dep Municipal 1; Melgar 3 Alianza Atletico 1.

PERU

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sporting Cristal	12	8	4	0	31	11	28
Universitario	12	7	3	2	19	13	24
Cienciano	12	6	2	4	16	12	20
Alianza Lima	12	5	4	3	21	14	19
Melgar	12	5	3	4	22	15	18
Sport Boys	12	4	6	2	16	12	18
Alianza Atletico	12	4	3	5	18	21	15
Dep Pesquero	12	2	6	4	11	16	12
Dep Municipal	12	3	3	6	12	19	12
IMI Talara	12	3	2	7	13	32	11
Union Minas	12	2	3	7	14	16	9
Juan Aurich	12	1	5	6	11	23	8

URUGUAY

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Mar 27-28: Danubio 1 Penarol 0; Liverpool 2 Bella Vista M 2; Bella Vista P 1 Rentistas 0; Nacional 1 Defensor 0; Dep Maldonado 4 River Plate 2; Frontera Rivera 2 Rampla Juniors 1.
Apr 1: Dep Maldonado 2 Frontera Rivera 2; Cerro 5 Huracan Buceo 1.
Apr 3-4: Danubio 1 Rentistas 1; Penarol 1 Bella Vista P 1; Defensor 6 Huracan Buceo 2; Bella Vista M 2 Tacuarembo 1; Rampla Juniors 1 Dep Maldonado 0; River Plate 2 Frontera Rivera 1.
Apr 7: Bella Vista M 4 Cerro 0.
Apr 11: Penarol 2 Dep Maldonado 0; Bella Vista M 3 Nacional 3; Defensor 5 Liverpool 0; Danubio 4 River Plate 1; Rentistas 1 Frontera Rivera 0; Rampla Juniors 1 Bella Vista P 0; Cerro 2 Tacuarembo 1.
Apr 17-18: Penarol 3 River Plate 0; Nacional 4 Liverpool 0; Defensor 1 Bella Vista M 0; Danubio 3 Dep Maldonado 1; Tacuarembo 3 Huracan Buceo 1; Rentistas 3 Rampla Juniors 0; Bella Vista P 1 Frontera Rivera 0.

URUGUAY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Danubio	7	5	2	0	24	8	17
Defensor	6	5	0	1	19	6	15
Penarol	7	4	2	1	11	4	14
Nacional	5	4	1	0	17	3	13
Rentistas	7	3	2	2	8	5	11
Bella Vista M	6	2	3	1	11	7	9
Cerro	5	3	0	2	11	12	9
River Plate	7	2	2	3	8	13	8
Bella Vista P	7	2	2	3	6	13	8
Rampla Juniors	7	2	1	4	6	13	7
Frontera Rivera	7	1	3	3	8	10	6
Dep Maldonado	7	1	2	4	9	14	5
Tacuarembo	6	1	1	4	6	11	4
Liverpool	6	0	3	3	3	13	3
Huracan Buceo	6	0	2	4	4	19	2

VENEZUELA

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Mar 21: Caracas FC 0 Italchacao 0; Union Tachira 3 Carabobo 1; Mineros Guayana 2 Univ de los Andes 2; Nueva Cadiz 2 Nacional 1; Estudiantes 4 Inter Lara 1.
Mar 28: Univ de los Andes 2 Caracas FC 1; Carabobo 1 Mineros Guayana 1; Nacional 2 Union Tachira 1; Inter Lara 4 Nueva Cadiz 2; Italchacao 0 Estudiantes 0.
April 4: Union Tachira 1 Univ de los Andes 0; Italchacao 4 Inter Lara 2; Nueva Cadiz 2 Carabobo 1; Caracas FC 5 Mineros Guayana 2.
Apr 11: Caracas FC 1 Union Tachira 1; Nueva Cadiz 6 Mineros Guayana 1; Inter Lara 4 Nacional 0; Italchacao 0 Carabobo 0; Estudiantes 0 Univ de los Andes 0.

VENEZUELA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Estudiantes	11	6	5	0	19	9	23
Nueva Cadiz	11	5	3	3	25	21	18
Italchacao	11	4	5	2	14	7	17
Univ de los Andes	11	5	2	4	17	16	17
Inter Lara	11	4	2	5	17	17	14
Union Tachira	11	3	4	4	14	18	13
Mineros Guayana	11	2	6	3	18	23	12
Nacional	11	3	3	5	11	18	12
Caracas FC	11	2	5	4	13	14	11
Carabobo	11	2	3	6	8	13	9

CONCACAF

MEXICO

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Preliminary round

Mar 26: Atlante 1 UAG 2.
Mar 27: Necaxa 2 Atlas 3; Tigres 1 Celaya 0.
Mar 28: Guadalajara 2 Cruz Azul 0; Morelia 3 Neza 0; Pachuca 2 Puebla 0; Toluca 4 Monterrey 0; America 3 UNAM 1; Santos 3 Leon 2.
Apr 2: UAG 1 Santos 1.
Apr 3: Cruz Azul 3 Toluca 2; Monterrey 1 Morelia 2; Puebla 1 Guadalajara 2; Celaya 1 Necaxa 1; Atlas 3 Pachuca 0.
Apr 4: Leon 2 Tigres 1; UNAM 1 Atlante 2; Neza 1 America 2.
Apr 10: Toluca 3 Puebla 0; Necaxa 4 Leon 0; Tigres 2 UAG 1.
Apr 11: Guadalajara 1 Atlas 1; Morelia 0 Cruz Azul 2; Pachuca 2 Celaya 2; UNAM 0 Neza 1; America 4 Monterrey 1; Santos 4 Atlante 2.
Apr 16: UAG 2 Necaxa 3.
Apr 17: Cruz Azul 4 America 0; Puebla 0 Morelia 1; Monterrey 1 Neza 0; Celaya 0 Guadalajara 0; Atlas 3 Toluca 3.
Apr 18: Leon 0 Pachuca 1; Santos 1 UNAM 2; Atlante 2 Tigres 1.

GROUP 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cruz Azul	14	8	3	3	26	20	27
Guadalajara	14	6	5	3	19	15	23
Atletico Celaya	14	5	5	4	22	18	20
Leon	14	4	1	9	16	27	13
Puebla	14	2	2	10	12	28	8

GROUP 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
America	14	9	2	3	25	19	29
Atletico Morelia	14	7	1	6	20	18	22
Pachuca	14	4	5	5	19	22	17
Toros Neza	14	3	4	7	15	25	13
UNAM Pumas	14	3	3	8	14	25	11

GROUP 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Necaxa	14	5	5	4	26	19	20
Tecos UAG	14	5	1	8	18	22	16
Atlante	14	3	4	7	24	30	13
Monterrey	14	4	1	9	21	32	13

GROUP 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Toluca	14	10	3	1	40	16	33
Atlas	14	8	4	2	27	14	28
Santos Laguna	14	8	2	4	28	23	26
Tigres	14	6	1	7	28	27	19

USA

Mar 27: Kansas City 0 Chicago Fire 3; San Jose Clash 2 Colrado Rapids 2 *San Jose Clash won on shoot-outs.*
Mar 28: MetroStars 1 Columbus Crew 0; LA Galaxy 0 Dallas Burn 0 *LA Galaxy won on shoot-outs*; Miami Fusion 1 New England 1 *Miami Fusion won on shoot-outs.*
Apr 3: MetroStars 0 DC United 1; Tampa Bay 2 Columbus Crew 3; Miami Fusion 1 Chicago Fire 4; Kansas City 0 New England 1; San Jose Clash 1 LA Galaxy 1 *San Jose won on shoot-outs.*
Apr 8: LA Galaxy 1 Columbus Crew 1 *Columbus won on shoot-outs.*
Apr 10: Chicago Fire 0 Dallas Burn 0 *Dallas won on shoot-outs*; Colorado Rapids 4 Miami Fusion 1; Kansas City Wizards 1 San Jose Clash 1 *San Jose Clash won on shoot-outs*; New England 2 DC United 2 *DC United won on shoot-outs.*
Apr 11: Tampa Bay 1 MetroStars 1 *MetroStars won on shoot-outs.*
Apr 15: Miami Fusion 1-1 Dallas Burn *Miami won on shoot-outs.*
Apr 17: New England 0 Columbus Crew 0 *Columbus won on shoot-outs*; DC United 1 San Jose Clash 1 *San Jose won on shoot-outs*; Chicago Fire 1 Los Angeles Galaxy 0; Colorado Rapids 1 Kansas City Wizards 1 *Colorado won on shoot-outs.*
Apr 18: Dallas Burn 2 Tampa Bay 1

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	P	W	SW	SL	L	F	A	Pts
DC United	4	2	1	1	0	9	5	7
NY/NJ Metrostars	4	1	2	0	1	4	4	5
Columbus Crew	4	1	1	1	1	4-	4	4
New England R	4	1	0	3	0	4	3	3
Miami Fusion	5	0	2	1	2	6	12	2
Tampa Bay M	3	0	0	1	2	5	9	0

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	P	W	SW	SL	L	F	A	Pts
Chicago Fire	5	4	0	1	0	11	2	12
Dallas Burn	4	1	1	2	0	5	1	4
Colorado Rapids	4	1	1	2	0	8	5	4
San Jose Clash	5	0	4	0	1	6	8	4
Los Angeles G	5	0	3	1	1	3	4	3
Kansas City W	5	0	0	2	3	2	10	0

SW = shoot-out win – 1pt; SL = shoot-out loss

AFRICA

NATIONS CUP QUALIFIERS

Group 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cameroon	3	2	1	0	7	1	7
Mozambique	3	1	0	2	4	8	3
Eritrea	2	0	1	1	1	3	1

Ghana's results expunged. They now qualify automatically as co-hosts

04.10.98	Mozambique-Eritrea	3-1
23.01.99	Eritrea-Cameroon	0-0
28.02.99	Cameroon-Mozambique	1-0
11.04.99	Mozambique-Cameroon	1-6
05.06.99	Cameroon-Eritrea	
19.06.99	Eritrea-Mozambique	

Group 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Morocco	3	1	2	0	5	4	5
Togo	3	1	1	1	5	4	4
Guinea	2	0	1	1	1	3	1

Sierra Leone expelled from competition – results expunged

04.10.98	Togo-Guinea	2-0
24.01.99	Guinea-Morocco	1-1
28.02.99	Togo-Morocco	2-3
11.04.99	Morocco-Togo	1-1
05.06.99	Morocco-Guinea	
19.06.99	Guinea-Togo	

Group 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ivory Coast	4	3	0	1	6	1	9
Congo	4	2	1	1	2	2	7
Mali	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
Namibia	3	0	0	3	1	6	0

03.10.98	Namibia-Congo	0-1
04.10.98	Mali-Ivory Coast	0-1
24.01.99	Ivory Coast-Namibia	3-0
24.01.99	Congo-Mali	0-0
28.02.99	Congo-Ivory Coast	1-0
11.04.99	Mali-Namibia	2-1
11.04.99	Ivory Coast-Congo	2-0
08.05.99	Namibia-Mali	
05.06.99	Namibia-Ivory Coast	
06.06.99	Mali-Congo	
19.06.99	Ivory Coast-Mali	
19.06.99	Congo-Namibia	

Group 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Africa	4	2	1	1	6	3	7
Gabon	4	2	0	2	5	7	6
Mauritius	4	1	2	1	4	4	5
Angola	4	1	1	2	4	5	4

03.10.98	South Africa-Angola	1-0
04.10.98	Gabon-Mauritius	2-0
23.01.99	Mauritius-South Africa	1-1
24.01.99	Angola-Gabon	3-1
27.02.99	South Africa-Gabon	4-1
28.02.99	Angola-Mauritius	0-2
10.04.99	Mauritius-Angola	1-1
11.04.99	Gabon-South Africa	1-0
05.06.99	South Africa-Mauritius	
05.06.99	Gabon-Angola	
19.06.99	Angola-South Africa	
19.06.99	Mauritius-Gabon	

Group 5

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Burkina Faso	3	2	1	0	6	3	7
Burundi	3	1	0	2	3	5	3
Senegal	2	0	1	1	1	2	1

Nigeria's results expunged. They now qualify automatically as co-hosts

13.12.98	Burundi-Senegal	1-0
23.01.99	Senegal-Burkina Faso	1-1
28.02.99	Burundi-Burkina Faso	1-2
11.04.99	Burkina Faso-Burundi	3-1
05.06.99	Burkina Faso-Senegal	
19.06.99	Burundi-Senegal	

Group 6

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zambia	4	3	1	0	5	2	10
DR Congo	4	2	1	1	6	5	7
Madagascar	4	1	1	2	5	6	4
Kenya	4	0	1	3	2	5	1

03.10.98	Kenya-Madagascar	1-1
04.10.98	Zambia-DR Congo	1-1
24.01.99	Madagascar-Zambia	1-2
24.01.99	DR Congo-Kenya	2-1
27.02.99	Kenya-Zambia	0-1
28.02.99	Madagascar-DR Congo	3-1
11.04.99	Zambia-Kenya	1-0
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Group 7

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
TUNISIA*	4	4	0	0	11	1	12
Algeria	4	1	1	2	6	5	4
Liberia	4	1	1	2	5	7	4
Uganda	4	1	0	3	2	11	3

**Qualified.*
The top two teams in Groups 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7, and the winners of Groups 1 and 5 qualify for the finals next year. The runners-up in Groups 1 and 5 go into a play-off group with Zimbabwe, from which the top team will qualify. Egypt qualify automatically as holders; Ghana and Nigeria qualify automatically as co-hosts.

02.10.98	Uganda-Algeria	2-1
04.10.98	Tunisia-Liberia	2-1
24.01.99	Algeria-Tunisia	0-1
24.01.99	Liberia-Uganda	2-0
27.02.99	Tunisia-Uganda	6-0
28.02.99	Liberia-Algeria	1-1
10.04.99	Uganda-Tunisia	0-2
11.04.99	Algeria-Liberia	4-1
05.06.99	Uganda-Liberia	
05.06.99	Tunisia-Algeria	
19.06.99	Algeria-Uganda	
19.06.99	Liberia-Tunisia	

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

PRELIMINARY ROUND – 2ND LEG

Mar 28: Kaloum Stars (Gui) 1 Real Banjul (Gam) 1 (Kaloum won 3-1 on agg)

FIRST ROUND – 2ND LEGS

Mar 26-28: Al Ahly (Egy) 2 Maji Maji (Tan) 0 (*Ahly won 5-0 on agg*); AFC Leopards (Ken) 0 Rayon Sport (Rwa) 1 (*Rayon won 3-1 on agg*); Raja Casablanca (Mor) 4 ASC Ndiambour (Sen) 0 (*Raja won 4-1 on agg*); Cotonsport (Cam) 3 Djoliba (Mli) 1 (*3-3 on agg – Djoliba won on away goals*); ASEC Abidjan (IvC) 3 FC105 Libreville (Gab) 1 (*ASEC won 3-2 on agg*); USM El Harrach (Alg) 6 USFA Yennega (BuF) 0 (*Harrach won 6-2 on agg*); Hearts of Oak (Gha) 6 Ela Nguema (EqG) 0 (*Hearts won 9-0 on agg*); EELPA (Eth) 2 SC Villa (Uga) 2 (*Villa won 7-2 on agg*); Mamelodi Sundowns (SAf) 3 Telcom Wanderers (Mwi) 0 (*Sundowns won 5-1 on agg*);
DSA (Mad) 1 SS Saint-Louisienne (Reu) 1 (*Saint-Louisienne won 2-1 on agg*); Esperance (Tun) 2 Al Mahala (Lby) 0 (*Esperance won 4-1 on agg*); Al Hilal (Sud) 2 Nchanga Rangers (Zam) 0 (*Al Hilal won 2-1 on agg*); Primeiro Agosto (Ang) 1 Vital'O (Brd) 1 (*Vital'O won 3-2 on agg*); Dynamos (Zim) 1 RL Defence Force (Les) 0 (*Dynamos won 4-0 on agg*); DC Motema Pembe (DRC) walkover – Costa do Sol (Moz) withdrew after 1st leg.
Still to play: Kaloum Stars (Gui) v Shooting Stars (Nig)

SECOND ROUND DRAW

Al Ahly v Rayon Sport; Raja Casablanca v Djoliba; ASEC Abidjan v USM El Harrach; Hearts of Oak v SC Villa; Kaloum Stars or Shooting Stars v DC Motema Pembe; Mamelodi Sundowns v SS Saint-Louisienne; Esperance v Al Hilal; Vital'O v Dynamos.
First legs April 30-May 2; second legs May 14-16

CUP-WINNERS CUP

FIRST ROUND – 2ND LEGS

Mar 26-28: Al Shaat (Lby) 2 WA Tlemcen (Alg) 1 (*Shaat won 4-2 on agg*); LPRC Oilers (Lbr) 1 AS Mineurs (Gui) 0 (*1-1 on agg – Mineurs won 4-3 on pens*); ASC Yeggo (Sen) 1 Royal Armed Forces (Mor) 0 (*RAF won 2-1 on agg*); Renaissance (Chd) 1 Wikki Tourists (Nig) 0 (*Wikki Tourists won 4-1 on agg*); Stade Malien (Mli) 1 Africa Sports (IvC) 1 (*Africa won 3-1 on agg*); Tanzania Stars 1 Simba FC (Uga) 1 (*Simba won 3-2 on agg*); Anges Fatima (CAR) 1 Dynamo Douala (Cam) 0 (*Dynamo won 3-1 on agg*); AS Fonctionnaires (BuF) 0 Club Africain (Tun) 1 (*Club Africain won 4-0 on agg*); Saint Michel (Sey) 2 Power Dynamos (Zam) 1 (*Dynamos won 7-3 on agg*); Bata Bullets (Mwi) 3 Matare (Ken) 2 (*Matare won 4-3 on agg*); Marsouins (Reu) 2 Maxaquene (Moz) 1 (*3-3 on agg – Maxaquene won 6-5 on pens*); Defence Force XI (Bot) 1 Orlando Pirates (SAf) 3 (*Pirates won 9-1 on agg*); Al Merreikh (Sud) 1 Al Masry (Egy) 0 (*1-1 on agg – Al Masry won 4-3 on pens*); Ndzimba (Gab) 2 Asante Kotoko (Gha) 1 (*Kotoko won 3-2 on agg*)
Inter-Stars (Brd) walkover – Coffee FC (Eth) withdrew.
AS Dragons (DRC) v Petro Atletico (Ang) postponed.

SECOND ROUND DRAW

AS Mineurs v Al Shaat; Wikki Tourists v Royal Armed Forces; Simba FC v Africa Sports; Club Africain v Dynamo Douala; Inter-Stars v Power Dynamos; AS Dragons or Petro Atletico v Matare; Orlando Pirates v Maxaquene; Asante Kotoko v Al Masry.
First legs April 30-May 2; second legs May 14-16

CONFEDERATION OF AFRICAN FOOTBALL CUP

FIRST ROUND – 2ND LEGS

Mar 26-28: Horoya (Gui) 3 US Medina (Alg) 2 (*4-4 on agg – US Medina won on away goals*); Insurance (Eth) 0 Al Ahli (Sud) 1 (*Al Ahli won 2-0 on agg*); APR FC (Rwa) 0 Canon Yaounde (Cam) 0 (*Canon won 2-0 on agg*); Ferroviario Beira (Moz) 1 Mumias Sugar (Ken) 0 (*Ferroviario won 2-1 on agg*); ASFTM (Mad) 0 Stade Tamponnaise (Reu) 1 (*Stade Tamponnaise won 6-1 on agg*); Etoile Filante (BuF) 2 Accra Great Olympics (Gha) 0 (*Etoile Filante won 4-3 on agg*); Desportivo Mongomo (EqG) 0 Vita Club (DRC) 1 (*Vita won 8-0 on agg*); Al Ahli Benghazi (Lby) 0 Wydad Casablanca (Mor) 2 (*Wydad won 3-1 on agg*); FC Man (IvC) 0 Diaraf Dakar (Sen) 3 (*Diaraf won 4-0 on agg*); Young Africans (Tan) 0 Kwara United (Nig) 3 (*Kwara won 4-0 on agg*); Police XI (Bot) 0 Saneamento Rangol (Ang) 1 (*Rangol won 4-2 on agg*); Centre Salif Keita (Mli) 0 Etoile Sahel (Tun) 2 (*Sahel won 5-0 on agg*); Royal Leopards (Swa) 1 Nkana FC (Zam) 6 (*Nkana won 8-3 on agg*); Express Red Eagles (Uga) 6 Medlaw Megbi (Eri) 0 (*Express won 6-1 on agg*).
CS Sfaxien (Tun) walkover – Energie (Ben) withdrew; Zamalek (Egy) walkover – Elite (Brd) withdrew.

SECOND ROUND DRAW

Al Ahli v US Medina; Ferroviario Beira v Canon Yaounde; Stade Tamponnaise v Zamalek; Vita Club v Etoile Filante; Diaraf Dakar v Wydad Casablanca; Saneamento Rangol v Kwara United; Express Red Eagles v Etoile Sahel; CS Sfaxien v Nkana FC.
First legs April 30-May 2; second legs May 14-16

ASIA

CUP-WINNERS CUP

All matches played in Tokyo

SEMI-FINALS

April 16
Talaba (Irq) 1 (Jathir Drain 36)
Al Ittihad (Sau) 3 (Al Sahafi 20, Atkinson 25, Bahja 90)

Kashima Antlers (Jap) 1 (Akita 12)
Chunnam Dragons (SKo) 4 (Roh Sang-rae 33, 86, Kim Jong-hyun 48, Lim Kwan-sik 66)

THIRD-PLACE MATCH

April 18
Kashima Antlers 1 (Hirase 42)
Talaba 0

FINAL

April 18
Al Ittihad 3 (Bahja pen 10, pen 105, Hawsawi 84)
Chunnam Dragons 2 (Roh Sang-rae 14, pen 70)
Game decided by golden goal

JAPAN

J.LEAGUE

Mar 20: Shimizu S-Pulse 1 Kyoto Purple Sanga 0; Nagoya Grampus Eight 0 JEF United Ichihara 0 (aet); Gamba Osaka 3 Avispa Fukuoka 2; Cerezo Osaka 1 Bellmare Hiratsuka 2; Kashima Antlers 1 Sanfrecce Hiroshima 0; Jubilo Iwata 3 Verdy Kawasaki 0; Urawa Reds 0 Vissel Kobe 0 (aet); Yokohama F Marinos 0 Kashiwa Reysol 1.
Mar 27: Kashiwa Reysol 1 Shimizu S-Pulse 2 (aet); JEF United Ichihara 3 Gamba Osaka 2 (aet); Verdy Kawasaki 2 Kashima Antlers 1; Vissel Kobe 0 Nagoya Grampus Eight 2; Sanfrecce Hiroshima 4 Urawa Reds 1; Avispa Fukuoka 2 Yokohama F Marinos 1; Kyoto Purple Sanga 0 Cerezo Osaka 1; Bellmare Hiratsuka 2 Jubilo Iwata 1.
Apr 3: Kashima Antlers 4 Bellmare Hiratsuka 2; Jubilo Iwata 2 Kyoto Purple Sanga 1; JEF United Ichihara 1 Avispa Fukuoka 3; Nagoya Grampus Eight 0 Sanfrecce Hiroshima 2; Gamba Osaka 2 Vissel Kobe 1; Shimizu S-Pulse 2 Yokohama F Marinos 3; Urawa Reds 2 Verdy Kawasaki 2 (aet); Cerezo Osaka 3 Kashiwa Reysol 0.
Apr 10: Bellmare Hiratsuka 0 Urawa Reds 3; Kashiwa Reysol 0 Jubilo Iwata 1; Yokohama F Marinos 6 Cerezo Osaka 0; Kyoto Purple Sanga 1 Kashima Antlers 2 (aet); Vissel Kobe 4 JEF United Ichihara 3 (aet); Sanfrecce Hiroshima 2 Gamba Osaka 0; Avispa Fukuoka 1 Shimizu S-Pulse 3; Verdy Kawasaki 2 Nagoya Grampus Eight 1.
Apr 17: Jubilo Iwata 1 Yokohama F Marinos 0; JEF United Ichihara 0 Sanfrecce Hiroshima 2; Nagoya Grampus Eight 3 Bellmare Hiratsuka 1; Gamba Osaka 0 Verdy Kawasaki 1; Vissel Kobe 1 Avispa Fukuoka 2 (aet); Cerezo Osaka 2 Shimizu S-Pulse 1; Urawa Reds 0 Kyoto Purple Sanga 1.

J.LEAGUE

	P	W1	W2	D	L	F	A	Pts
Jubilo Iwata	7	6	0	0	1	12	4	18
Kashima Antlers	6	4	1	0	1	14	6	14
Shimizu S-Pulse	7	4	1	0	2	13	8	14
Verdy Kawasaki	7	4	0	1	2	10	10	13
Yokohama FM	7	4	0	0	3	15	7	12
Sanfrecce H	7	4	0	0	3	11	5	12
Cerezo Osaka	7	4	0	0	3	9	12	12
Grampus Eight	7	3	0	1	3	9	8	10
Urawa Reds	7	2	0	3	2	8	8	9
Kashiwa Reysol	6	3	0	0	3	7	7	9
Gamba Osaka	7	2	1	0	4	11	13	8
Avispa Fukuoka	7	2	1	0	4	11	14	8
Bellmare H	7	2	0	0	5	7	15	6
JEF United	7	0	1	2	4	7	15	4
Vissel Kobe	7	0	1	1	5	8	14	3
Kyoto Purple S	7	1	0	0	6	4	10	3

W1 = win in 90 minutes – 3pts; W2 = win in extra time – 2pts; D = draw after extra time –

CHINA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sichuan Quanxing	5	3	2	0	9	2	11
Liaoning Fushun	5	3	1	1	9	4	10
Guangzhou Songri	5	3	0	2	6	6	9
Beijing Guoan	5	2	2	1	6	2	8
Shangdong Luneng	5	2	2	1	6	4	8
Shanghai Shenhua	5	1	4	0	3	2	7
Jilin Aodong	5	1	3	1	3	4	6
Shenyang Haishi	5	1	3	1	5	8	6
Chongqing Longxin	5	1	2	2	4	4	5
Qingdao Yizhong	5	1	2	2	5	7	5
Dalian Wandae	5	0	4	1	3	4	4
Tianjin Teda	5	0	4	1	1	3	4
Wuhan Hongtao	5	1	1	3	2	9	4
Shenzhen Pingan	5	0	2	3	3	6	2

INDIA

LEAGUE PLAY-OFF – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Salgaocar SC	10	7	2	1	17-	6	23
East Bengal	10	5	4	1	14	8	19
Churchill Brothers	10	4	3	3	12	11	15
Mohun Bagan	10	2	4	4	5	10	10
JCT Mills	10	1	6	3	8	9	9
FC Kochin	10	0	3	7	3	15	3

IRAN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Pirouzi Tehran	22	16	3	3	45	15	51
Sepahan Isfahan	22	10	9	3	24	11	39
Saipa Tehran	23	11	6	6	33	24	39
Esteghlal Tehran	21	10	8	3	31	15	38
AbooMoslem	22	10	4	8	32	26	34
Paas Tehran	22	8	10	4	23	21	34
Chooka Talesh	23	9	6	8	25	33	33
Foolad Ahvaz	24	8	7	9	28	32	31
Sanat-Naft Abadan	23	6	8	9	17	33	26
Shahrdari Tabriz	23	4	13	6	23	23	25
Fajr-Sepasi Shiraz	22	6	7	9	22	25	25
TeraktorSazi	22	5	9	8	23	28	24
Malavan	24	5	9	10	15	21	24
Zob-Ahan	24	6	5	13	19	29	23
Poly-Akril	23	4	8	11	20	29	20
Bank-Melli	24	2	12	10	17	32	18

LEBANON

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Safa	18	11	5	2	34	13	38
Al-Ansar	18	10	6	2	24	11	36
Al-Tadamon Tyre	18	9	3	6	32	22	30
Shabab Al-Sahel	18	8	3	7	23	19	27
Homenetmen	18	7	4	7	16	23	25
Homenmen	18	5	8	5	19	25	23
Al-Ahly Sidon	18	5	5	7	22	25	21
Al-Nejmeh	18	4	7	7	15	14	19
Salam Zghorta	18	3	9	6	10	12	18
Borj	18	4	6	8	13	28	18
Al-Ahed	18	3	8	7	19	28	17
Al-Akha'a-Ahly	18	3	7	8	20	27	16

SAUDI ARABIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al-Hilal	22	15	3	4	39	22	48
Al-Ittihad	22	15	3	4	45	32	48
Al-Ahli	22	10	8	4	38	22	38
Al-Shabab	22	10	8	4	40	23	38
Al-Nasr	22	10	3	9	33	24	33
Al-Ittifaq	22	8	6	8	29	30	30
Al-Riyadh	22	7	6	9	30	32	27
Al-Ta'ee	22	7	4	11	24	40	25
Al-Nijma	22	6	5	11	26	33	23
Al-Wahda	22	6	3	13	32	46	21
Al-Ansar	22	5	6	11	20	34	21
Hajr	22	2	7	13	21	39	13

UAE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al-Wahda	31	18	7	6	63	33	61
Al-Nasr	31	15	8	8	60	45	53
Al-Wasl	31	15	7	9	60	34	52
Al-Ain	31	14	9	8	53	35	51
Al-Ahli	31	15	5	11	61	46	50
Al-Jazira	31	13	6	12	52	37	45
Al-Shabab	31	12	7	12	39	44	43
Al-Sha'ab	31	10	12	9	50	45	42
Al-Khaleej	31	11	7	13	59	63	40
Al-Sharjah	31	9	9	13	38	54	36
Bani Yas	31	8	10	13	37	50	34
Ras Al-Khaima	31	2	1	28	34	120	7

OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Melbourne	28	17	6	5	50	26	57
Sydney United	27	17	4	6	51	32	55
Perth Glory	27	16	4	7	59	34	52
Northern Spirit	27	14	4	9	36	34	46
Marconi-Fairfield	27	14	3	10	52	47	45
Sydney Olympic	27	12	7	8	46	35	43
Adelaide City	27	12	6	9	38	26	42
Brisbane Strikers	27	11	6	10	40	45	39
Newcastle Breakers	27	10	7	10	27	32	37
Carlton Blues	27	9	4	14	46	45	31
Wollongong City	27	8	7	12	42	49	31
West Adelaide	27	7	6	14	35	43	27
Melbourne Knights	27	7	5	15	30	42	26
Gippsland Falcons	27	5	9	13	17	44	24
Canberra Cosmos	27	4	2	21	21	56	14

Top six qualified for play-offs

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Brian Glanville's LAST WORD

How could you explain logically Blatter extolling the efficiency of the World Youth Cup organisation when the whole thing was falling apart?

Sign of the times...Nigeria looked forward to a trouble-free tournament but the reality was somewhat different

Blatter blethers on through the chaos

BLATTER BLETHER...continued. No, I'm not writing, this time, about those alleged £30,000 donations which the deeply esteemed new president of FIFA insists were wholly above board. I am writing about Blatter in Nigeria, and the extraordinary nonsense he talked, making you wonder whether he and reality are, as so often seems to happen in the higher echelons of sport, becoming strangers to one another.

And whether we should raise that 51 (you remember? "Sepp Blatter has 50 new ideas every day, and 51 of them are bad") to 52.

How, logically, to explain the rubbish he came out with, quite early in the World Under-20 tournament in Nigeria, extolling the efficiency of the organisation, when the whole thing was falling apart? Confirming, as if we didn't know, that while sub-Saharan Africa produces the most superb human material, it couldn't on the whole organise a booze-up in a brewery? Hardly had Blatter blethered than reports were coming in from appalled, incensed journalists that all was chaos.

Tickets should have been issued by the First Bank of Nigeria. Perhaps it was not their fault that a couple of days before battle was due to commence, the tickets still had not arrived from London. So the bank withdrew.

By the way, in case you've forgotten, Blatter's unlamented predecessor, Joao Havelange, had arrogantly wrested the 1995 tournament away from Nigeria – only, for plainly political reasons, to let them have it in 1999. Each decision as irrational as the other.

Hotel prices in Nigeria zoomed upwards, sometimes by as much as 800 per cent. When the teams' coaches finally turned up, there was not enough petrol for them. When Argentina's players trained, allowing spectators in to watch them, brutal police arrived to clear them out. Nor did it need Malaysian gamblers and their acolytes to cut the power supplies during floodlit games, though certain alleged perpetrators were said to have been arrested in Ibadan when the lights went out for 12 minutes at the Mexico versus Ireland match.

Perhaps the most exquisite moment came at the match between USA and England when Blatter was eulogising the arrangements and out went the lights!

The Great Ideas Man can scarcely have been so embarrassed since that delectable moment on the podium in Las Vegas at the 1993 World Cup draw, when Robin Williams leapt on to the platform and greeted Blatter with the words: "Wonderful to meet you after feeling you for so long!" It moved a malign American sports columnist to opine next day that Blatter's real future might be as a straight man.

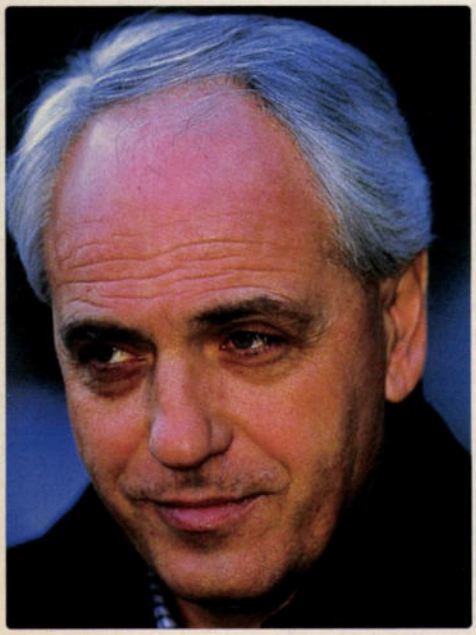
Going back with Bettega

IN TURIN the week before the great confrontation between Juventus and Manchester United, I spoke to Roberto Bettega in his enormous office. Silver-haired now, still handsome and charming, the former Juventus and Italy striker is vice-president of the club, which makes him virtually the main man dealing at directorial level with team matters.

Luciano Moggi, that formidable wheeler-dealer who is nicknamed The Nice Pinocchio of Italian Football, for reasons evident enough, looks after the transfer market. Umberto Agnelli, younger brother of the dominant Gianni, maintains the family tradition of being the main man, though titles tend to change.

Facing Bettega's desk, on the wall opposite, is a huge glass-fronted cabinet containing a multiplicity of trophies. With a smile, he took out a small replica of the European Cup, pointing out that to win it outright, you must be champions three times in a row, or five times altogether. Juve have still to do that, despite their many finals. Bettega, as he remarked, had twice appeared on the losing side.

I reminded him that back in 1976, when he nipped in characteristically to head Italy's second goal against England at Rome's Olympic stadium in a 2-0 World Cup qualifying win, he, centre-forward Francesco Graziani and I had taken part in a TV discussion. Then, Bettega had cogently remarked that the problem with zonal defence was that there were certain moments of hesitation, when the defenders were not sure which man to pick up. Clearly he had exploited one of those. At the time, and after that game, his observations seemed the more cogent for the fact that Italy's man-to-man markers had utterly subdued the English strikers.



Main man...Bettega has Juventus team matters at heart

I might have reflected – and perhaps we saw as much at Wembley a year later when England won by the same score – that man-markers can be pulled about and themselves be confused.

Bettega remarked in Turin that huge concentration in defence is needed. "If you leave a space uncovered, it becomes *un punto di conquista*" – literally, a point of conquest, or a spot from where a goal can be scored.

We also talked about the sudden and quite unexpected departure of Marcello Lippi, the Juve coach. Yes, it was widely known that this would be his last season in Turin, that he would be moving on to take charge of Inter, on a contract worth well over £3million a year. But the mode of his going, Bettega admitted, was, "a bolt from the blue. He suddenly announced it in the dressing-room, after a game against Parma." Why?

Local journalists said that Lippi had simply lost touch with the players, who no longer responded to him; that the club had shown no desire to keep him, though Bettega jokingly remarked that in four years at Juve, Lippi had won so much that had he continued thus for eight years, there would have been nothing left for anybody else.

Yet the whole strange episode does make you wonder about managers and motivation. Long ago, Andy Nelson, who had given up as manager of Charlton Athletic, told me that he felt no manager could motivate his team indefinitely. Putting the boot on the other foot, Brian Mears, when chairman of Chelsea, once said – when David Sexton was in charge of the club – that "managers need motivating, too".

I asked Bettega whether Lippi's successor, Carlo Ancelotti, had made any radical changes in tactics or training. "No," he replied. "Perhaps there was a psychological boost which had a positive influence on the players."

Will Lippi, a man of charm and presence, be able to motivate the Inter players? And if so, for how long?

Goodness knows, they are in desperate need of it at the moment, though we know that Lippi, very wisely, won't join them until the end of the season. In vain does the Inter president, Massimo Moratti, deplore recent results and talk wildly about sacking the lot. If he wants to know who to blame for the fiasco, let him look in the mirror.

A fiasco indeed was his treatment of a previous manager, Gigi Simoni, keeping him when he might logically have sacked him, sacking him when he certainly should have kept him, so hard on the heels of that 2-0 revenge win against Real Madrid in the Champions League.

Poor Mircea Lucescu, who succeeded him, never had a chance. Yet how close Inter went to turning the tables on Manchester United at San Siro. And would they have lost at Old Trafford were it not for a stand-off between Lucescu and the turbulent Taribo West, which led the coach to exclude him? Ah, sweet mysteries of love and life and football!

Hold it...Millwall and Wigan at Wembley

A great day, of sorts

THE MAGIC of Wembley, the mystery of Millwall. Knowing that the Lions were due to contest the Final of the Auto Windscreens Shield (come again?) at Wembley, I went to the Den on Easter Monday to watch them play Blackpool. How are the mighty fallen!

It wasn't so long ago that the Lions' roar came from the throats of such as Teddy Sheringham and Tony Cascarino. Much, much longer ago Blackpool were a still greater power in the land, a force in the First Division. Three times FA Cup finalists, with the likes of the incomparable Stanley Matthews, the ebullient Stanley Mortensen, the immaculate Harry Johnston and, in more modern times, the unflappable Jimmy Armfield.

Paradox abounded that day. Already one knew that Millwall would sell their 41,000 Wembley tickets. Later they disposed of another 7,000. Yet that day only 6,000-odd came down to the Den, as the chirpy little song has it.

A pamphlet told of Millwall's fight to Kick Out Racism. Yet I knew that when the Lions had gone recently to Walsall, to qualify for Wembley, the black home centre-forward had been endlessly abused with monkey noises.

A Millwall fanzine poured scorn on Wembley and its facilities, yet 48,000 went there to see their team lose to Wigan in the last minute.

Violence and Millwall fans have never been far apart, yet I know Oxbridge graduates who have turned their back on the bigger clubs and go down to the Den to find real community and an authentic milieu.

From the archives...

June 1967

FRONT COVERS featuring British players are none too common for *World Soccer* these days, but there was one on the June 1967 issue. It was taken at a packed Craven Cottage, Fulham, and showed two players who had distinguished careers on the pitch and off it. Fulham's Bobby Robson (on the left) later became manager of Ipswich, then England, and Liverpool's Ian St John became a regular as a TV front-man.

The main feature inside the issue concerned one of the several attempts to establish soccer as a major sport in North America. The top crowd on the first day of the National Professional Soccer League was 14,163 to see Philadelphia Spartans against Toronto Falcons – some 5,000 more than at a Major League baseball game nearby.

However, as Colin Jose noted, many American commentators felt that the game would not enjoy long-term popularity because of the *lack* of physical contact.

Elsewhere, the late Arthur Rotmil included news that Norberto Raffo of Argentina's Racing Club had scored three goals in just over four minutes against Sao Paulo.

At home, Brian Glanville paid tribute to Celtic keeper Ronnie Simpson (below right), who had just won his first Scotland cap aged 36, and Leslie Vernon referred to a much-publicised punch-up which resulted in both the offender (Arsenal's Ian Ure) and the victim (Fulham's Allan Clarke) being sent off. Leslie's view was...

> I trust that this "un-Arsenal-like" exhibition of bad sportsmanship was an isolated incident and that the habit of "tactical fouls" will not invade the game in England.

WORLD SOCCER, June, 1967

TEN

Long may they reign

by Brian Glanville

IT was heartening and significant that the Celtic-Dukla European Cup semi-final ties should have brought into direct opposition two of the game's most distinguished veterans: Ronnie Simpson of Celtic, and Josef Masopust, of Honved. Simpson and Masopust are both 36 years old, each has played a key part in the success of his club this season, each has represented his country.

In Simpson's case, his cap against England, three days after Celtic had beaten Dukla in the first leg of the Cup semi-final, represented his début for Scotland. Few players can have refuted so emphatically the old saying, "Early ripe, early rotten", for Simpson made his bow in first-class football, for Queen's Park, at the ripe old age of 14.

His contribution to Scotland's 3-2 victory over England was a [illegible] one; two saves from astounding goalkeeping phenomenon and one from [illegible] of all.

Yet goalkeepers, as we know, are traditionally long lived. Lev Yashin was not only the most talented goalkeeper in the 1966 World Cup—his third—but, at 37, is still the best in Russia. Giuliano Sarti, of Inter and Italy, is over 30 now, and going strong. So is Antonio Roma of Argentina, whose magnificent save from Geoff Hurst in the earlier World Cup error against Wembley made up for an earlier error against Carrizo, the 40-year-old River Plate goalkeeper, remains perhaps the most astounding goalkeeping phenomenon of all.

Revival

[illegible] of players like [illegible] elegant control [illegible] Muerte who had done so much [illegible] Argentina the South [illegible] win [illegible] Championship in 1957, [illegible] career in [illegible] with youth and stamina—unlike the old Di Stefano side—win the European Cup.

Yet here is Masopust, still a dominant and highly effective player. There, last season, before Inter greedily snapped him up and made him inactive, was Luis Vinicio, of Lanerossi Vincenza; top scorer in the tough Italian Championship at 34. There, in Argentina, are defenders such as Varacka and Cap, elderly but inspired, while in France, Raymond Kopa is still playing effectively for Reims.

Recently the excellent Argentinian weekly, *El Grafico*, published a long article extolling the veterans of the Championship. Varacka were singled out for special praise, as defenders who, in the past, had relied for their success on power and speed, modifying their game as their physical capacity lessened. But perhaps the best provided by Humberto Maschio. When, a year or so ago, he returned to Racing Club of Buenos Aires from Italy, his career seemed effectively finished.

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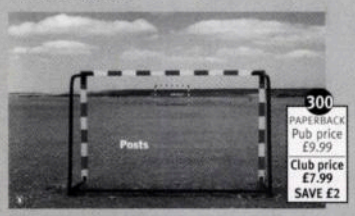

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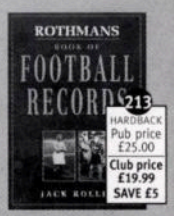

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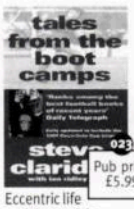

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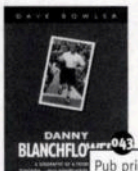

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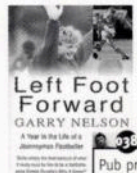

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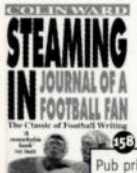

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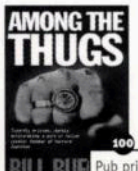

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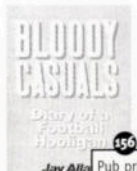

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